

## The effects of hostile intent attribution on intergroup relations

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# THE EFFECTS OF HOSTILE INTENT ATTRIBUTION ON INTERGROUP RELATIONS

A dissertation  
submitted to the Graduate of Human-Environment Studies,  
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Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology

by

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# APPROVAL

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# Chapter 1

## *Introduction*

An overview on hostile intent attribution  
in intergroup conflicts

## **Abstract of Chapter 1**

Hostile intent attribution refers to a perception of others' negative actions toward you as purposeful and hostile when their intention is unclear. In this chapter, I first present the mechanisms of hostile intent attribution that operate at the individual level, and then propose the mechanisms that operate at the group level. Second, I outline the characteristics of hostile intent attribution through comparison with other beliefs. Third, this chapter identifies biases that contribute to groups' engagement in hostile intent attribution, and contend that hostile intent attribution serves various functions. Finally, the structure of the present study will be introduced.

Intergroup conflict refers to the conflicts happen between the groups. Conflicts are an inseparable part of every inter-group relations and a domain of human interaction. Every day, countless conflicts, whether at the individual or group level, erupt when people perceive that their goals or interests are incompatible with other groups (Bar-Tal, 2000a; Michell, 1981; Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). For example the wars between the nations; the racial wars. Inter-group conflicts is characterized as being violent, existential, unsolvable, and of a zero-sum nature (Krisberg, 1995; Bar-Tal, 1998). About inter-group conflicts previous analyses has been primarily to shed light on specific historical and political contexts. In addition, throughout the past decades, socio-psychological researchers have developed many theories through enormous empirical research to help us understand what operate the social behavior and inter-group conflicts. Social beliefs is one of the most basic processes in the way that demonstrated how and why the inter-group conflicts occurred.

The term “social beliefs” refers to group members’ shared cognitions on social topics and issues that concern the group. The central themes and contents (such as group history, interests, goals, myths, etc.) form the social beliefs (Bar-Tal, 2000b). Beliefs about conflicts become psychological barriers that prevent intergroup resolution and underlie intergroup distrust and hostility. It contribute directly to inter-group prejudice and competition, even from which a single incident can give rise to inter-group conflicts. Thus, the present study considers the psychological bases of negative social beliefs and these social beliefs shape inter-group misunderstandings, and, ultimately,

conflict.

Hostile intent attribution as one of social beliefs which can lead to catastrophic consequences for interpersonal relations. Hostile intent attribution refers to a bias toward viewing others' negative actions toward you as purposeful and hostile when their intention is unclear (Dodge, 1980). Numerous previous studies have shown general support for hostile intent attribution theory, suggesting that hostile intent attribution typically leads to aggressive behavior (see Hudley & Graham, 1993; Yeager, Miu, & Powers, & Dweck, 2013). It is an important element of the development of aggressive and antisocial behavior in theoretical accounts (Orobio de Castro, Veerman, Koops, Bosch, & Monshouwer, 2002), and a target for cognitive behavioral interventions to reduce antisocial behavior in interpersonal relations (Hudley & Graham, 1993; Lochman & Lenhart, 1993). Thus, the present study will examine hostile intent attribution for inter-group conflicts and seek to develop the concept of hostile intent attribution at the group level.

The present chapter will first briefly introduce the Individual and collective level mechanisms what may contribute to the collective motivation to engage in hostile intent attribution. Furthermore, the chapter will describe the psychological barriers of collective victimhood and perceived threats, and propose my study through the way of compare hostile intent attribution with collective victimhood and perceived threats. Then, it will present the research about hostile intent attribution to date. The focus will be mostly on what underlie hostile intent attribution and what results it lead. Finally, the chapter will present the construction of the present study.

## **1.1 Psychological mechanisms underlying hostile intent attribution**

### *1.1.1 Individual level mechanisms*

Hostile attribution bias occurs in ambiguous situations wherein people interpret the intent of others as hostile in accordance with their expectations (Milich & Dodge, 1984). For example, imagine an adolescent who is walking down a school hallway. A peer runs down the hallway, knocking him over and spilling his books on the floor, then other peers laugh (Dodge, 2006). Does he perceive the behavior as an accident or on purpose? How does the student respond? Hostile intent attribution is evoked by a behavioral experience of social exclusion. In particular, hostile schemas, which are stored in memory, lead to hostile intent attribution more easily when individuals make a judgment in an ambiguous situation. Dodge (2006) has theorized that hostile schemas are shaped by experiences of traumatic threat and insecurity situation, such as parents' or peers' violence. During social interactions, these schemas lead individuals to perceive others' intent as hostile and therefore promote hostile intent attribution. Hostile intent attribution can be viewed as a kind of cognitive bias, or a general schema that leads to an understanding of social events from a perspective of hostility (Dill, Anderson, & Deuser, 1997; Spector & Fox, 2010).

Beside individuals' experiences, Dodge (2006) also summarized three other mechanisms of socialization for the development of hostile intent attribution. The first mechanism is social learning. If a person who often interacts with children tends to display hostile intent attribution, the children are more likely to display hostile intent attribution. The second

mechanism is insecure attachment. Compared with the children with a secure attachment history, children with an insecure attachment history are more likely to attribute hostile intent (Ziv, Oppenheim, & Sagi-Schwartz, 2004). The third mechanism is social failure, which has a relationship with hostile intent attribution (Graham & Juvonen, 1998). In addition, hostile intent attribution is related to intelligence (Gomez & Hazeldine, 1996), age (Crick & Dodge, 1996), and individual traits (Yeager et al., 2013).

In sum, these mechanisms may underlie group members to perceive that out-groups have tendencies to harm in-group. Furthermore, they may lay the foundation of hostile intent attribution for the psychological mechanisms that promote group members to attribute out-groups' tendency as hostility toward in-group. For example, one way that social learning that group members who inherit collective memory, this memory describe histories of the conflicts' beginnings and course is likely to influence the group members' perception about out-group.

Because previous studies on hostile intent attribution mainly focus on interpersonal relationships, which is relatively well understood, I will rely on theoretical and empirical evidence on the interpersonal level. In addition, the present analysis of hostile intent attribution focuses on the context of historical direct violence in which groups repeatedly aggress against each other with the intention of harming or killing each other. Such a context may leave the group members involved with a deep sense of hostility and a belief that competitive groups have the ongoing intention to harm in-group members.

### *1.1.2 Collective level mechanisms*

#### 1.1.2.1 Biased collective memory of intractable conflicts

In general, groups tend to evolve their extensive suffering into collective memory, and this memory in turn evolves to describe the conflicts to group members (Cairns & Roe, 2003; Wertsch, 2002), who ascribe meaning to the histories of the conflicts' beginnings and courses (Devine-Wright, 2003). Often, group members' shared collective memory is supported by governmental institutions, which create a narrative that omits the facts and is biased, selective, and purposeful according to the group's present goals (Bar-Tal, 2007). For example, to maintain positive group identity and a favorable image of the in-group (Bar-Tal, 2007), groups sometimes silence a shameful historical episode or cleanse the history by altering what is taught to members of the group, and dehumanize out-groups for defending their group and status quo. Thus, despite group members did not experience unjustness and be directly harmed, they also could label themselves as victims because of their fellow group's suffering in the past conflicts (Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Hai, Schori, & Gundar, 2009).

These collective memory serve as a basis for construction of a common social beliefs (Noor, Shnabel, Halabi, & Nadler, 2012). The narrative of collective memory legitimizes in-group behavior in the conflicts, delegitimizes the adversary, and places the in-group in the position of victim in the intractable conflicts in order to preserve a favorable image of the in-group (Bar-Tal, 2007). Thus, when group member's memory about inter-group relation was constructed by inter-group conflicts, groups may

develop social beliefs to afford them with strategies for coping with the present inter-group relation. Furthermore, when these shared beliefs are about delegitimization of rival groups and in-group's suffering, the group members will tend to express especially against related out-group in conflicts. Thus, the formation of the sense of social beliefs is partly based on part of collective memory of conflicts, and these social beliefs well established the social-psychological barriers to last conflict.

#### 1.1.2.2 Biased collective intergroup conflicts

In addition, the collective accounts of inter-group conflicts and transgression also can contribute the biases to social beliefs (Noor, et al., 2012). Nisbett and Cohen (1996) have proposed that social culture affects social-cognitive responding. Intergroup conflicts is often evolved to a culture and this culture may be manifested through groups' religion, narrative, arts (Noor, et al., 2012). The culture as such conflicts tend to encourage the group members to classify the situation as "us vs. them," and highlight "our" suffering and "their" violence through dehumanizing out-groups (Lynch & Galtung, 2010; Noor et al., 2012). When the culture of inter-group conflicts supply the basis for group members' consciousness, the social beliefs which was developed by the culture of conflicts will make group members less likely to display empathy for competitive out-groups, even though sometimes out-groups may suffer greater than the in-group. When out-groups are labeled as vermin or insects and as aggressive, it may encourage group members' hostile intent attributions by viewing the out-group as subhuman.

In sum, the biases in-groups' collective memories, as well as in their

accounts of conflicts, may lay the foundation for hostile intent attribution. These processes also encourage the group members who identify more strongly with the in-group to be more likely to accept major socially shared beliefs (e.g., social beliefs of the ethos of conflicts). Thus, despite social identity providing the conditions to support the continuation of intergroup conflicts, these negative shared social beliefs predict the intergroup conflicts directly.

#### 1.1.2.3 Social culture

Nisbett and Cohen (1996) have proposed that social culture affects social-cognitive responding. They argued that a culture that places value on respect and honor will encourage hostile intent attribution in response to personal threat and provocation. Social culture can affect people's socio-cognitive processes and behaviors (Morris & Peng, 1994). For example, collectivist societies may be more sensitive to anything that could harm their group, and individualist societies may tend to support policies that promote social coexistence (Leong & Ward, 2006). Similarly, compared with other social cultures in which people do not emphasize group honor and respect, a culture that overemphasizes the value of group honor and respect may tend to more easily experience out-group exclusion when they come into contact with the in-group narrative about conflicts. Groups create a phenomenon that leads group members to perceive that their honor is harmed, and evokes emotions such as humiliation and helplessness through a narrative of collective trauma. Those narratives may encourage group members to attribute the competitive groups' motivations as hostile; consequently, they

are likely to respond unkindly or with an aggressive attitude toward out-groups.

#### 1.1.2.4 Self-categorization

Individuals perceive others' personal acts to be carried out with an intention to harm because of personal experiences, and certain collectives such as nations or ethnic groups may also perceive hostile intent attribution. This may be a result of intergroup transmitted narratives, which include many forms, such as violent conflicts between nations and groups, intergroup competition, terrorism, incidents, and occupations, even if not all group members experience the events directly. However, not all group members respond the same way to the negative narratives of the ingroup. This is because whether individuals identify as members of the ingroup category or not leads to the different evaluations of intergroup events. Considerable evidence has shown that the ways people perceive, think about, and evaluate intergroup relations are influenced by social categorization rather than individual qualities (e.g., Brewer, 1988; Fiske, Lin, & Neuberg, 1999). When the ingroup identity is salient, there is effectively no psychological separation between self and the group as a whole, and people tend to include other ingroup members in the self-concept and perceive every ingroup members as sharing the same feeling and beliefs (e.g., Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995).

A social psychological theory of self-categorization (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), which is a part of an individuals'

self-concept, suggests that individuals identify with and view themselves as a member of the group to which they belong (Jenkins, 1996; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). The process by which individuals cognitively assimilate the personal self into the collective self is referred to as depersonalization. This transformation brings group members' self-perception and behaviors in line with the context-relevant ingroup, and equates group members' self-interest with ingroup interests. Likewise, intergroup events that affect any member of the ingroup are experienced as though they affect the self. Moreover, group members subsequently adopt various beliefs, emotions, and attitudes based on experiences of their ingroup (Bar-Tel et al., 2009). Self-categorization is an important psychological mechanism that underlies the development of a collective sense of hostility among group members who do not experience negative events directly. The belief of hostile intent attribution is also based on and reflected in self-categorization. Thus, self-categorization provides a foundation for hostile intent attribution for group members.

## **1.2. Other social beliefs and hostile intent attribution**

About social beliefs that the most notable models of these beliefs include integrated threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 1993; Stephan & Stephan, 1996) and collective victimhood, which have received great attention in the field of intergroup conflict. These two models of negative inter-group relation-supporting beliefs will be described and compared with hostile intent attribution in the next section.

### *1.2.1 Common characteristics among integrated threat theory, collective victimhood, and hostile intent attribution*

Perceived threats, collective victimhood, and hostile intent attribution are beliefs that arise from collective memory of intergroup conflicts and account of inter-group negative events. They are perceived as social-psychological barriers. Bar-Tal (1998) suggests three functional characterizations of these beliefs. (1) They justify in-group goals in conflict, and can provide a set of reasons to support these goals. These beliefs justify the in-group's aggressive policies or behavior in intergroup conflicts, and help them escape feelings of guilt for in-group misdeeds within intractable intergroup conflicts. (2) They delegitimize the adversary. The social beliefs are formed by intergroup conflict, and these beliefs delegitimize the adversary (Bar-Tal, 1990). Perceived threats, collective victimhood, and hostile intent attribution deny the humanity of competitive out-groups, describe out-groups in dehumanized terms, and involve negative trait characterization. (3) They create enemies for in-groups. These beliefs may encourage group members to see competitive out-groups as enemies when these social psychological barriers cannot be overcome. In addition to Bar-Tal's above functions, it is possible to formulate an additional function of these three beliefs. By supporting conflicts, perceived threats, collective victimhood, and hostile intent attribution play important roles in preventing the resolution of harsh and lasting conflicts. They operate on the cognitive, emotional, and motivational processes that impede positive intergroup relationships. Finally, a trait characterization of these three beliefs can be

summarized as subjective; these three beliefs are group members' subjective evaluations of the intergroup intractable conflict, regardless of whether or not their perceptions are "real".

Due to differences in the content of social beliefs, perceived threats, collective victimhood, and hostile intent attribution have their own distinct characteristics. These are introduced in the following sections.

### *1.2.2 Integrated threat theory*

*Integrated threat theory* describes four different types of threat: realistic threats, symbolic threats, intergroup anxiety, and negative stereotypes. Realistic threats are described as the subjective perception held by a group that its political and economic power, and/or material or physical well-being are threatened by out-groups. Symbolic threats are based on perceived group differences in morals, values, and standards. Intergroup anxiety involves the negative feelings of in-group members who experience fear or uneasiness in connection with actual interactions with out-group members (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Stereotype threats involve negative beliefs about out-group characteristics that create negative expectations concerning the behavior of out-group members. Field tests of the integrated threat theory model have found that ratings of realistic threats (Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006), symbolic threats (Curseu, Stoop, & Schalk, 2007), intergroup anxiety (Ho & Jackson, 2001; Voci & Hewstone, 2003) and negative stereotypes (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Spender-Rodgers & McGovern, 2002) predict negative out-group attitudes and biases.

### *1.2.3 Integrated threat theory and hostile intent attribution*

*Competitiveness.* Integrated threat theory focuses on competitive intergroup relationships; specifically, realistic threats and symbolic threats. The concept of realistic threats originates in realistic group conflict theory, which proposes that when two groups compete for scarce resources, the potential winner threatens the other group's well-being (Sherif & Sherif, 1969). The concept of symbolic threats is derived from symbolic racism theory, which posits that racism results from conflicting values and beliefs (Kinder, & Sears, 1981). Realistic threats and symbolic threats both imply a zero-sum situation in which one group's gain means the other side's loss. They enhance groups' engagement in conflicts over competition for resources. In contrast to these two types of threats, hostile intent attribution addresses out-groups' hostility toward the in-group, regardless of whether or not the groups are competing for resources. Hostile intent attribution does not imply a zero-sum situation.

*Certainty.* Hostile intent attribution involves certainty about the presence of negative out-group attitudes toward the in-group. It engenders definite certainty in in-group members that out-groups are engaging in hostile behavior towards them, and that out-groups' behaviors toward the in-group are deliberate. On the contrary, perceived threats do not involve definite judgments about out-group attitudes; although out-groups may seem threatening, in-group members cannot be certain whether the out-group's threatened behavior is deliberate. For example, an out-group's market

expansion may harm an in-group's interests, but it does not mean that the out-group intends harm to the in-group on purpose.

*Definitely Targeted.* Having perceived threats, individuals and groups cannot confirm whether or not the competing out-groups' threatened behavior is targeted at the in-group. For example, stereotype threats are described as overall impressions of an out-group (such as "violent," or "cold"), and these negative stereotypes reflect negative expectations about out-groups. These perceptions consist of descriptions of the out-groups' general characteristics. Thus, those out-groups may behave based on negative attitudes toward any group, not only directly against the in-group. Different with perceived threats, hostile intent attribution includes the perceptions that threats are directly targeted against the ingroup, this hostile attitude may be considered to be held only toward the ingroup, and when the hostile out-groups interact with other out-groups, they may exhibit friendly behavior.

Although many theory models of perceived threats elaborate on group members' reactions to threat. For example, the Neuberg and Cottrell's (2002) model theorized that different kinds of threats arouse different emotional response, which in turn lead to different attitude and behavior. However, in fact, large of research have shown that threats are related to inter-group prejudice and emotional reaction, few studies provided the evidences to show that perceived threats predicted aggressive response to against the out-groups directly. Riek et al. (2006) have demonstrated that when the perceived activities of competition continued, inter-group hostility

became severe, in this case the aggressive behavior may be led. For example, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair reported his perception about 9 / 11 that Iraq was trying to destroy the Western way of life, as a result, Blair demonstrated the Iraq' hostile intention what promoted the people of UK to support the war with Iraq. Research on Terror Management Theory (Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2004) also shown group members express aggressive attitude toward out-groups when group members feel an increased need to safeguard their worldview from threats. Thus, I consider that only when group members feel that out-groups have the intention to deprive their resources or destroy their cultural worldview, the impact of such threats can become drastic. In other world, only when group members are led to consider that rival groups are attempting to harm them, in which their aggressive response may be led to against relative out-groups in the contexts of threats.

#### *1.2.4 Collective victimhood*

In recent years, many theoretical as well as empirical studies have focused on the social belief of collective victimhood (see, for example, Andrightto, Mari, Volpato, & Behluli, 2012; Nalder & Saguy, 2003; Noor, Brown, Gonzalez, Manzi, & Lewis, 2013). Collective victimhood is defined as a belief held by an in-group that the in-group is a victim within an intergroup conflict. The theory of collective victimhood provides a powerful framework for explaining aggressive intergroup behavior (Nawata & Yamaguchi 2012), lasting conflicts (Halperin & Bar-Tal 2011), and failure of

intergroup conflict resolution (Myers, Hewstone, & Cairns 2009). Collective victimhood is thus considered a barrier to peacemaking.

#### *1.2.5 Collective victimhood and hostile intent attribution*

Collective victimhood and hostile intent attribution result from intractable conflicts, even those in the distant past. Collective victimhood mainly stresses the group's suffering in past conflicts, in which they encountered injustice, discrimination, prolonged exploitation, and extensive harm (Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Hai, Schori, & Gundar, 2009). The collective sense of victimhood forms with traumatic experiences, and groups encode these experiences in their collective memory, which can help them see themselves as victims. The sense of collective victimhood can allow groups to provide explanations, delegate responsibility, gain other groups' support, and escape feelings of guilt in intractable conflicts (Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Hai, Schori, & Gundar, 2009).

Collective victimhood highlights the role that the in-group played in the conflicts (as the victim or the perpetrator), but it is not necessary to stress the role that the in-group played when engaging in hostile intent attribution. Indeed, when group members perceive themselves as the victim in intractable conflicts, it implies that competitive groups possess an ongoing potential for harm and the intergroup relationship may remain tense. On the other hand, when group members perceive their in-group as the perpetrators in intractable conflicts, they may worry about competitive groups taking revenge on the in-group, and this may result in group members believing

that rival groups maintain hostility toward them. It implies that the in-group has the potential to be harmed, and thus the in-group remains under continuous conditions of threat.

Furthermore, research has established that the victims tend to engage aggressive behavior against rival out-groups, and perpetrators make compensation and prosocial behavior for victims when they realize their group has deviated from the humanitarian moral norms. However, in the real world, the conflicts such as territories, natural resources, value still not be easy to resolve because of psychological barriers of social beliefs. As argued above, obviously, collective victimhood could not demonstrate the situation that why and how the perpetrators reduce their guilty to last or leave themselves involve into the situation of conflicts. In the context that victim group repeatedly express the attitude with intention to harm against perpetrator groups. As a result, the perpetrator groups' members may tend to believe that relative out-groups carry out with the intention either to harm the group as a whole or some of group members. Such contexts may help the perpetrator escape from the guilty and leave themselves involve with a deep belief that they also suffer in the conflicts. This approach can work for both sides of victims and perpetrators, it leads to the behavioural intention such as the desire to support the aggressive policies and to avenge rival groups for in-group's benefits.

Moreover, although hostile intent attribution and collective victimhood can be real or partly imagined, but usually collective victimhood is based on experienced events (Bar-Tal et al., 2009), yet hostile intent

attribution is not limited to these context. Definitely, collective memory of conflict and account of conflicts is a part of the socio-psychological basis for forming hostile intent attributions. However, in the situation that when inter-group relation is full of ambiguity, uncertainty and risky, the side of group members' fear is aroused by pointing out that their losses from the continuation of the present situation. In this situation such like would up the risk that group members attribute out-groups' intention as hostility. In other word, it is a state where the group members did not experienced inter-group conflicts, the sense of hostile intent attribution still can be established in the ambiguity situation.

As can be seen, several social beliefs that are related to inter-group relations have been discussed in social psychology. However, some limitations about these social beliefs yet not be discusses in the previous study. The goal of present study is to fill the gaps in the field of inter-group conflicts by using the theory of hostile intent attribution and analyzes its antecedents, functions, moderators, and consequences at the group level.

### **1.3 About the present study**

The present study on the development of hostile intent attribution is centered on the group level. Throughout the present study, I will use human basic value, social identity and intergroup contact as predictors of the antecedents of hostile intent attribution to establish theoretical models. Additionally, the functions of hostile intent attribution will be combined into the theoretical models.

### *1.3.1 Closed-mindedness*

Closed-mindedness is a mechanism of human stagnation (Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2011). Halperin and Bar-Tal (2011) have demonstrated that open-/closed-mindedness can play an important role in opinion formation. Furthermore, closed-mindedness has shown a positive association with orientations such as intolerance, conservatism, and authoritarianism (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003), which likely help to establish social-psychological barriers. Likewise, Nisnet, Hart, Myers, and Ellithorpe (2013) indicated that closed-mindedness lies at the core of false beliefs or misperceptions. Indeed, group members who are closed-minded are likely to seize on prior opinions and become resistant to change. All of this makes the process of intergroup trust and understanding more difficult. Likewise, closed-mindedness may incite a negative image of rival outgroups that favors hostility and violence. Thus, the present article will focus on closed-minded values and ideology that may result in the perception of hostile intent attribution.

#### *1.3.1.1 Basic human values*

Basic human values are criteria or standards that guide people to select and justify their actions, and to evaluate people or events (Schwartz, 1992). Individual attitudes and behaviors are associated with these values. Different values motivate different attitudes or actions (Schwartz, 1996). According to motivational characteristics or goals, Schwartz (1992) proposed

10 types of values to explain attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions. Although basic human values are associated with out-group attitudes, socio-political orientation, and perceptual domains, few studies have tried to demonstrate the effects of basic human values on the mechanisms of intergroup conflicts.

As mentioned above, values that overemphasize the group's honor or respect may encourage hostile intent attributions. Thus, the first goal of the present study is to empirically validate the relationship between two different types of basic human values (traditionalism and universalism, which entail a social focus) and hostile intent attribution.

#### 1.3.1.2 Social identity

As mentioned before, social identity provides a new approach to understanding intergroup relations. It promotes in-group similarity and out-group distinctiveness through the making of comparisons (Lemaine, 1974; Vanneman & Pettigrew, 1972). On the one hand, those comparisons can motivate group members' uniformity with the in-group. On the other hand, social identity also encourages in-group members to make intergroup comparisons that can enhance intergroup distinctiveness. Social identity, as a kind of social glue, is the origin of group loyalty (Van Vugt, & Hart, 2004), and it is assumed that once group members identify themselves with a group, their goals or welfare become intertwined with the group's goals or welfare (Brewer, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). The more one is identified with a group, the more likely one is to wish for retribution and revenge (Bar-Tal, 2003). Social identity is a source of intergroup conflicts.

However, previous experiments with minimal intergroup situations have provided evidence that in-group favoritism is not necessarily related to out-group hate. Social identity alone does not predict intergroup negative attitudes and aggressive behavior if the elements of intergroup distrust, active hostility, and hate for the out-group are lacking. Thus, in the present study, nationalism and patriotism are assessed to test the association between national identity and hostile intent attribution. Nationalism is an expression of national identity that emphasizes the authoritarian structures between a nation and the nation's people and inspires authoritarian beliefs. On the other hand, patriotism stresses a nation's welfare, and is based on a universal humanist value system (Staub, 1997). It contributes to the rejection of authoritarian relations (Blank & Schmidt, 2003). Compared with patriotism, nationalism is more sensitive to intergroup relationships. The second goal of this study is to examine the relationship between nationalism and patriotism as antecedents of hostile intent attribution.

### *1.3.2 Intergroup contact*

Intergroup contact permits the relationship between competitive groups to move forward, and forms the basis of theoretical models for reducing intergroup bias (Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). A positive contact experience can facilitate intergroup understanding and reduce intergroup anxiety and negative social beliefs (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). More importantly, growing evidence shows that frequent and positive contact can increase intergroup trust (e.g., Cehajic,

Brown, & Castano, 2008; Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger, & Niens, 2006). Intergroup trust encourages individuals to overcome the belief that out-groups have negative intentions toward the in-group (Mitchell, 2000). Thus, the third goal of this study is to demonstrate how intergroup contact work on hostile intent attribution.

### *1.3.3 Psychological functions of hostile intent attribution*

The functions of hostile intent attribution have been described above in comparison with the beliefs about perceived threats and collective victimhood. The present study proposes that hostile intent attribution can be viewed as a valuable psychological resource that serves several negative functions for promoting intergroup conflict. This study will investigate two functions of hostile intent attribution, namely the functions of justifying in-group aggressive behaviors and increasing negative inter-group emotions (here, mainly fear and anger).

#### *1.3.3.1 Increasing negative group emotions*

Society members are affected by shared cultural frameworks, and their emotional experiences take the form of a collective emotional orientation (Barbalet, 1998; Bar-Tel, 2001, 2007; Mackie & Smith, 2002). Collective emotional orientations predominate in conflicts (Petersen, 2002; Scheff, 1994; Bar-Tel, 2007). Collective emotions include anger, fear, pride, humility, and so on. These emotions arise when social members are in a particular situation or environment, and enable them to respond adaptively.

For example, Bar-Tal (2007) proposes that intractable conflict introduces threats and dangers. These threats and dangers are embedded into collective memory and ethos as beliefs; meanwhile, society members share this collective memory and ethos through mass media or educational institutions. Society members may experience fear or anger, and their emotional experience take the form of a collective emotional orientation.

According to the Appraisal Model of Emotion, emotions arise from specific cognitive appraisals (Smith & Ellsworth, 1985). Perceiving that out-groups have hostility towards the in-group may be associated with intergroup distrust and various negative intergroup emotions. These negative intergroup emotions are action-oriented emotions, such as anger or fear (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000), that are generally aroused by cognitive appraisals and response tendencies (Halperin, Sharvit, & Gross, 2008). Once again, evaluation of conflicts may lead to attributions of out-groups' attitudes as hostility, and negative emotion may become an inherent part of the standing psychological context as a result.

#### 1.3.3.2 Justifying in-group aggressive behavior

Generally, before intergroup violence can occur, it is necessary to justify the violence for the sake of group members' support (Bandura, 1999). Eidelson and Eidelson (2003) proposed that an exaggerated sense of in-group vulnerability, for example, collective victimhood (Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012), can facilitate moral justification, which can arouse group members' collective emotions such as anger (Smith, Cronin, & Kessler, 2008; Noor,

Shnabel, Halabi, & Nadler, 2012). The present study hypothesizes that stressing out-groups' hostile motivation can also provide groups with a useful tool for instilling group members with a sense of threat and reminding them of out-groups' attacks in order to justify violent strategies. Thus, hostile intent attribution may encourage group members to accept aggressive strategies as a means of self-defense.

#### **1.4 The context of the present study**

The present study is carried out in the context of the China–Japan relationship. China and Japan enjoy very close cultural and economic relations that stretch back to antiquity. Currently, China is Japan's largest trading partner (Nishimura & Hirayama, 2013), while Japan is also one of China's most important economic partners (Dean, Lovely, & Mora, 2009). However, despite the critical importance of the cooperative partnership between these two nations, relations between their respective populations are strained because of contrasting viewpoints relating to the Second World War and associated political problems that remain unresolved (Qiu, 2006; He, 2007). For example, in 2012, striking and widespread anti-Japan demonstrations occurred in response to the Japanese government's nationalization of the Diaoyu Islands (known as the Senkaku Islands in Japan; Nye, 2013). These events signaled a climax in the deteriorating relationship between these two nations. According to reports published by China Daily and by The Genron NPO of Japan, about 64.5 and 84 percent of the Chinese and Japanese populations, respectively, harbor negative

impressions of each other (Koh, 2012). In this study, I analyzed the relationship between China and Japan from a socio-psychological perspective.

### **1.5 Contributions of the present study**

The present study attempts to propose a new conceptual framework of hostile intent attribution from a psychological perspective. Focusing on the role of hostile intent attribution in the inter-group relationship, the study makes some academic contributions to the hostile intent attribution literature. First, as argued above, through the years, a number of approaches have been proposed to focus on the beliefs of group's past and present suffering in the inter-group conflicts, and these beliefs about group's past and present suffering were one of most contributors to successfully predicted conflicts. However, few approaches focus on social beliefs related to possible future suffering. Originally, of course, the belief of hostile intent attribution focus not only on the past and present the group's losses, but also on the possible future losses. Thus, the present study demonstrates the role of hostile intent attribution in intergroup relationships, which can lead to a new socio-psychological perspective explaining intergroup conflicts and, furthermore, developing intergroup conflict theory.

Second, the hostile intent attribution approach is a perspective that aims to be a general theory about people's negative emotion and aggressive behavior. It is assumed that hostile intent attribution express strong aspects of perceived others' harmful intention and that aggressive behaviors are

acted. The theory of hostile intent attribution appear to be value in explaining inter-group conflicts. However, less attention has been given to analysis of hostile intent attribution at the group level. The present study aims to demonstrate that hostile intent attribution is an important elements of inter-group aggressive attitude. This study's findings can advance our understanding of how group members react to hostile intent attribution.

Third, from a practical perspective, given the considerable impact of hostile intent attribution on the inter-group relationship, this study's findings can provide some insight into methods of conflict resolution and promote inter-group relations. Through these three contributions, I expect this research to theoretically enrich the literature on hostile intent attribution through the examination of a different cultural context, and to practically enhance our understanding of China–Japan relations.

## **1.6 Structure of the present article**

On the basis of the above argument of hostile intent attribution, the present study aims to test the role of hostile intent attribution in intergroup conflicts. Thus, this study examines the roles of basic human values, social identity, and intergroup contact in the psychological processes and functions of hostile intent attribution. The following is an overview of the present study.

The current chapter (Chapter 1) has presented the literature on hostile intent attribution and has stressed that hostile intent attribution arises from collective memory of intergroup conflicts as well as other

negative beliefs. This chapter has provided an overview of and framework for the present situation of hostile intent attribution. Chapters 2 through 4 will demonstrate and empirically validate the mechanisms of hostile intent attribution.

In Chapter 2, I review theories of hostile intent attribution, traditionalism, universalism, and perceived threats. Based on this theoretical review, I develop hypotheses on the relationship between basic human values and hostile intent attribution. I then test my hypotheses using the results of surveys conducted in China and Japan.

In Chapter 3, based on the theoretical review, I develop hypotheses on the relationship between nationalism and intergroup emotion, with hostile intent attribution as a mediator. I then test my hypotheses using the results of surveys conducted in China and Japan.

In Chapter 4, I first review theories of attribution responsibility, hostile intent attribution, and inter-group anger. Based on this theoretical review, I develop hypotheses on the relationship among the variables. I then test our hypotheses using the results of surveys conducted in Japan.

In Chapter 5, inter-group contact is considered as a method for reducing intergroup bias; therefore, I introduce the relationships between out-group contact and attitudes held by in-group members against out-groups as evidence for reducing hostile intent attribution.

In Chapter 6, combining the results of Chapters 2 through 5, I outline the mechanisms of hostile intent attribution. In particular, the dimensions of future study about hostile intent attribution will be discussed.

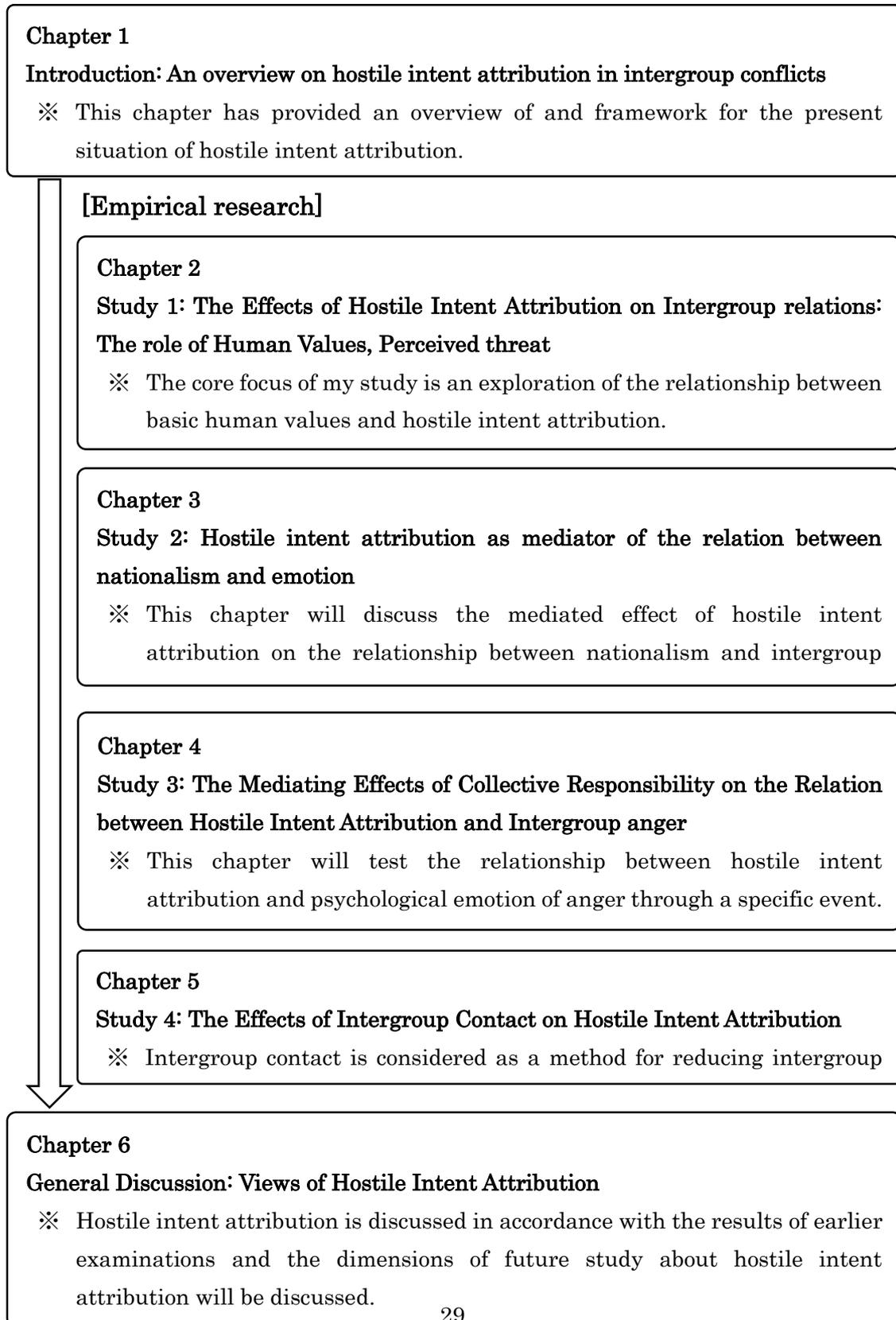


Figure 1-1: Structure of the present article

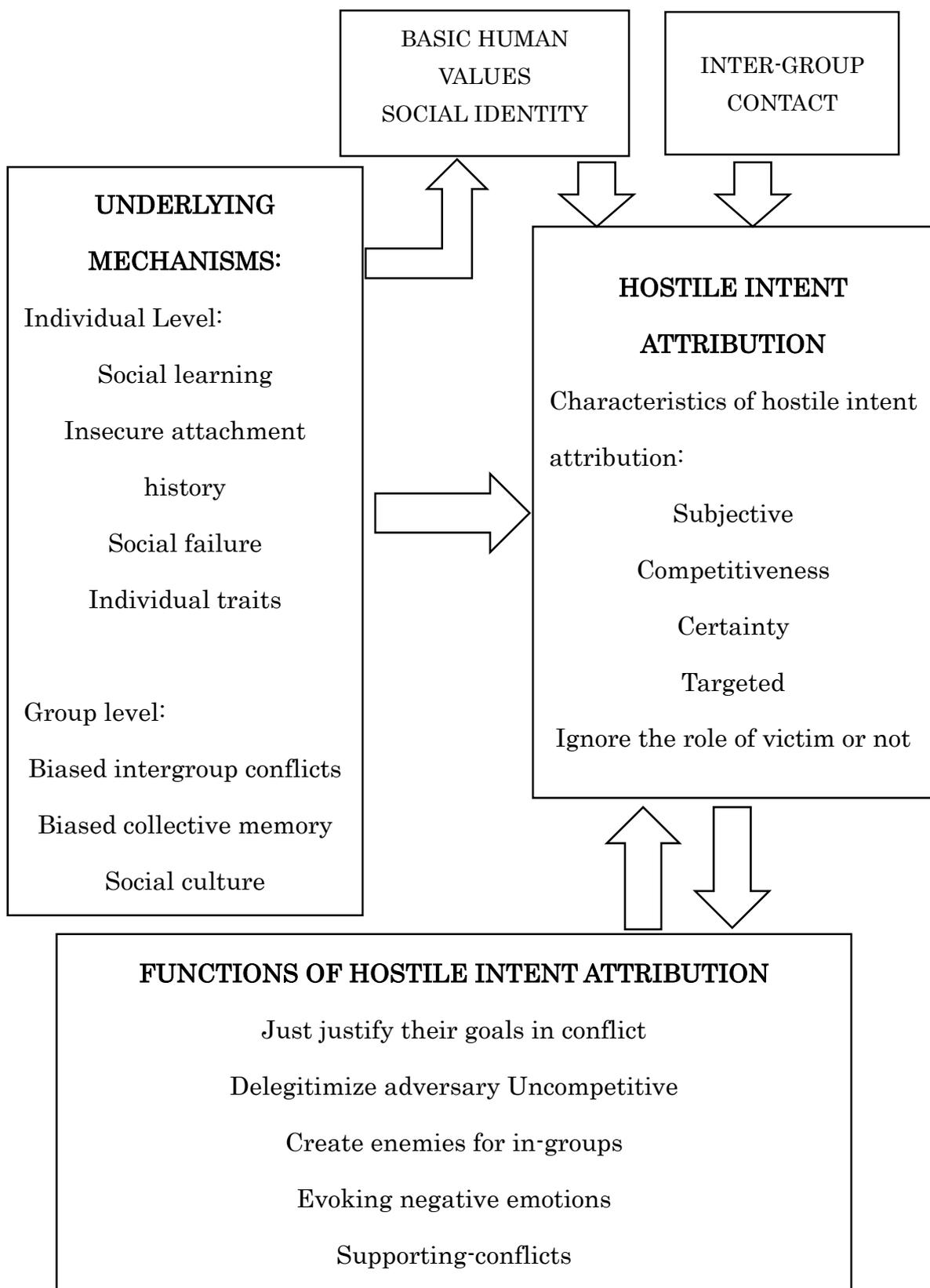


Figure 1-2: Antecedents and functions of hostile intent attribution

## Chapter 2

### *Study I*

The effects of hostile intent attribution on intergroup relations: The role of human values, perceived threat

## **Abstract of Chapter 2**

This study examines a specific effect of hostile intent attribution within intergroup relationships. Based on my application of integrated threat theory, I hypothesised that human value (traditionalism and universalism) predicted hostile intent attribution via different types of symbolic and realistic threats. I conducted a survey among two university population samples of Chinese and Japanese respondents. The results for our first sample of Chinese undergraduate students ( $N = 201$ ) revealed that both traditionalism and universalism predicted hostile intent attribution and that these relations through symbolic threats, but not realistic threats. However, the results for the second sample of Japanese undergraduate students ( $N = 256$ ) differed, indicating that traditionalism, but not universalism, predicted hostile intent attribution via symbolic and realistic threats. Furthermore, hostile intent attribution predicted support for aggressive polices directly in both samples. In conclusion, I discuss the theoretical and practical implications of these findings.

## 2.1 Introduction of study I

The core focus of my study is an exploration of the relationship between basic human values and hostile intent attribution. Furthermore, I identified the psychological processes underlying the effects of traditionalism and universalism on hostile intent attribution through perceived threats. In this paper, I first review theories of hostile intent attribution, traditionalism, universalism and perceived threats. Based on this theoretical review, I develop hypotheses on the relationship between basic human values and hostile intent attribution. I then test our hypotheses using the results of surveys conducted in China and Japan. In the final section of this chapter, based on my statistical analysis and discussion of the survey results, I examine the study's implications and propose a future research agenda.

### *2.1.1 Values as antecedents of hostile intent attribution*

Values are criteria or standards that guide people in selecting and justifying their actions, as well as in evaluating people or events (Schwartz, 1992). Individual attitudes and behaviour are associated with these values. A study by Halperin and Bar-Tal (2011) has shown that the value of traditionalism is associated with the avoidance of intergroup compromise, while the value of universalism entails the promotion of positive intergroup relations. I consider values that have been long ignored to be important factors in relation to intergroup conflicts. Thus, an investigation of the effect of values on intergroup conflicts is pertinent.

Schwartz (1992) has identified ten types of basic values relating to people's motivation. In the current study, I opted to examine the relationship of two of these values, namely, traditionalism and universalism, with hostile intent attribution for the following reasons. First, traditionalism has been found to be associated with negative attitudes towards out-groups (Schwartz, 2006a; Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2011). Second, compared with other values (for example, benevolence), universalism is more likely to promote acceptance of out-groups (Schwartz, 2007) and positive intergroup relations. I, therefore, selected traditionalism and universalism as the two antecedent variables in our study.

#### 2.1.2.1 Traditionalism

Traditionalism entails an attitude of respect, commitment and acceptance towards the customs and ideas that represent shared group experiences and a collective fate (Schwartz, 1992). These experiences and fate symbolise a group's unique and enduring ethos, promoting its solidarity and survival (Durkheim, 1912; Parsons, 1951; Schwartz, 1992; Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2011).

This study posits that traditionalism is positively related to hostile intent attribution. Traditionalism may lead to cognition that is based on categorising, thereby providing a basis for a negative attitude held towards out-groups. Indeed, empirical studies have shown that traditionalism can induce detrimental effects such as a positive association with anti-immigrant behaviour (Schwartz, 2009), foreign military intervention (Schwartz, 2010)

and authoritarianism (Schwartz, 2003). An overemphasis on tradition may also result in feelings of unease, oppression and sensitivity pertaining to anything that could lead to changes in the group among in-group members. These manifestations of anxiety may, in turn, promote a high level of traditionalism that results in avoidance of intergroup contact and induces attribution of negative traits to out-groups to justify this behaviour. The greater the degree of importance attached by people to the preservation of their own culture, the greater the likelihood that they will show heightened sensitivity towards anything that could harm their group (González, Verkuyten, Weesie, & Poppe, 2008). Furthermore, because traditionalism generates positive feelings towards the in-group, in an ambiguous situation requiring self-protection, it provides a basis for attributing wrongdoing to an out-group. Thus, we postulate in this study that traditionalism is likely to promote a perception of hostility attributed to out-groups and aimed at maintaining an in-group's sense of unique features rooted in the past.

#### 2.1.2.2 Universalism

Universalism has been defined as the motivation to understand, appreciate and tolerate different or even rival groups and to promote the welfare of all people by emphasising broadmindedness, social justice, equality, a peaceful and beautiful world, unity with nature and environmental protection (Schwartz, 1992). Universalism holds that there are no differences between people across the world and that everyone must be treated equally.

In my study, I posited that universalism has a positive effect on hostile intent attribution. Universalism is more likely to evoke positive perceptions and prosocial activity that benefit the world (Schwartz, 2007). It even motivates actions of self-sacrifice to promote the welfare of others (Schwartz, 2009). Indeed, several empirical studies have shown that universalism is a contributing factor in promoting a positive attitude towards out-groups (Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2011; Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995) and a tendency to accept out-groups (Schwartz, 2009). Contrasting with traditionalism, universalism does not induce anxiety over anything transformative and, therefore, advances the development of positive intragroup interactions. Furthermore, because universalism incorporates self-sacrifice as a characteristic feature, it is less likely to result in hostile intent being attributed to others to justify the behaviour of in-group members, even in ambiguous situations. Thus, it may be an important factor in decreasing hostile intent attribution.

### *2.1.2 The role of perceived threats*

My study, which is based on integrated threat theory propounded by Stephan and Stephan (1996), incorporates several theoretical perspectives on intergroup attitudes. Integrated threat theory identifies four main types of threats: realistic threats, symbolic threats, intergroup anxiety and negative stereotypes (Stephan & Stephan, 1996). Although all four threat types contribute to negative attitudes held towards out-groups, this study focuses mainly on perceived realistic and symbolic threats, because these are the

most typical threat types evident in negative intergroup relations (Bobo, 1983; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Falomir-Pichastor, Muñoz -Rojas, Invernizzi, & Mugny, 2004).

The conception of realistic threats, which originates in realistic group conflict theory, has been further expanded by Stephan, Stephan and Gudykunst (1999). In line with this expanded conception, a realistic threat, as applied in this study, refers to the subjective perception held by an in-group that its welfare is threatened by out-groups, regardless of whether or not the threat is “real”. I specifically focus on realistic threats emanating from market competition and from security, political power and material considerations.

Within integrated threat theory, symbolic threats relate to conflicts of value that can also have detrimental effects on intergroup relations (Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006). The conception of symbolic threats is derived from symbolic racism which entails the desire to protect certain cultural symbols and arouses negative individual attitudes towards out-groups (McLaren, 2003). In accordance with symbolic racism theory, symbolic threats, as applied in my study, refer to the subjective perception that the in-group’s existing value system and culture are being threatened by out-groups.

I hypothesised that perceived threats may play an important role in relations between traditionalism and hostile intent attribution for two reasons. First, traditionalism entails the following conservative characteristics: resistance to change (Schwartz, 2006a), a desire to preserve habits and customs and belief in an immutable past (Schwartz, 2009). These

characteristics of traditionalism serve to sensitise in-group members, desiring to protect or maintain the group's traditions, to anything that may affect their customs and ideas. Interactions with out-groups that have even slightly different cultures and values may affect the integrity of symbols, ideas and beliefs within the in-group, causing strongly traditionalistic members to feel easily threatened. Similarly, nationalism, which advocates the importance of maintaining cultural values, has been associated with perceived threats (Ljubic, Vedder, Dekker, & Geel, 2013). Second, several empirical studies have shown that perceptions of symbolic and realistic threats play important underlying roles in fostering prejudice against out-groups (Riek et al., 2006, Curseu, Stoop, & Schalk, 2007; Ljubic et al., 2013). Perceived threats readily induce psychological distress. Previous studies have shown that the perception that the in-group is under threat easily leads to negative feelings held by its members towards an out-group. This includes characterisation of the out-group as being violent and intrusive (González et al., 2008; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, & Prior, 2004). Thus, when group members encounter a situation in which out-groups deprive them of their resources, security or values, or destroy these, they are likely to consider these groups as competitors with hostile intent towards their own group.

I also suggest that universalism reduce hostile intent attribution via perceived threats for the following reasons. As previously mentioned, those who uphold universalism easily accept others who differ from them (Schwartz, 2009), have positive perceptions of out-groups and promote

prosocial activities that benefit the world (Schwartz, 2010). Studies have found that an attitude entailing a high level of acceptance towards others is associated with a correspondingly low level of perceived threats (González et al., 2008). It leads to fewer threats being perceived and a more positive attitude towards out-groups compared with an attitude that entails a low level of acceptance towards others (Rohmann, Florack, & Piontkowski, 2006; Ljujic et al., 2013). Based on these findings, it is reasonable for us to argue that universalism is associated with fewer perceived threats compared with traditionalism. As such, I expect that universalism directly influences perceived threats, and, further, that it affects hostile intent attribution through perceived threats.

Although traditionalism and universalism often entail totally different attitudes towards out-groups, this does not imply a conflictual relationship between them. I suggest that they can mutually coexist within people's value systems. Traditionalists may also uphold universalistic values. For example, pursuing environmental protection can simultaneously preserve traditional customs. The difference between these two values is that whereas traditionalism entails devotion to the in-group, universalism is concerned with others and not with self-interest (Schwartz, 2006b). I suggest that these different value characteristics are the root cause of differences in perceptions held towards out-groups. Based on the above statements, we propose the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1: Traditionalism will predict hostile intent attribution through perceived threats.*

*Hypothesis 2: Universalism will reduce hostile intent attribution through perceived threats.*

*Hypothesis 3: Hostile intent attribution will predict support for aggressive policies.*

## **2.2 Method**

### *2.2.1 Participants*

To test my hypotheses, I conducted a questionnaire-based survey of population samples belonging to two different cultural contexts. I gathered data from 201 Chinese undergraduate students and from 256 Japanese undergraduate students in June 2013. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire during their free time. The questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Chinese participants, with a mean age of 19.8 years ( $SD = 1.26$ ), consisted of 63 males, 134 females and 4 participants who did not report their sex. The participants were from three universities located in Sichuan Province, and their legal domiciles covered almost every Chinese province. I distributed and collected questionnaires with the assistance of instructors employed at these universities.

Japanese participants, with a mean age of 19.19 years ( $SD = 1.41$ ), consisted of 113 males, 142 females and 1 participant whose sex was unreported. The participants were from two universities located in Fukuoka Prefecture and were legally domiciled in various Japanese prefectures. We

also distributed and collected questionnaires with the assistance of instructors employed at these universities.

### *2.2.2 Measures*

The questionnaire used for the survey included demographic questions as well as measures of media contact, warm image, symbolic threat and hostile intent attribution. Questionnaire items were originally written in Japanese and then translated into Chinese. I applied a back-translation procedure to check that meanings were comparable. All of the questionnaire items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*.

*Symbolic threat* was assessed with four items that focused on perceptions that an out-group was threatening the in-group's values and culture. While the items were based on the work of Stephen, Martnez Martnez, Schwarzwald, & Tur-Kaspa (1998), I modified them to suit the present study. Two examples of these items were: "Chinese values are being threatened by Japan" and "Chinese and Japanese values are mutually exclusive". Values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .81 and .76, respectively.

*Realistic threat* was measured with four items relating to security, the market, political statutes and dominion. These items were also derived from Stephen et al. (1998) and modified for the present study. Examples included: "The Chinese (or Japanese) market is now threatened by Japan (China)" and "Japan has threatened Chinese social security". These scales

proved reliable, and values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .79 and .61, respectively.

*Traditionalism* was measured with four items adapted from Schwartz (2003). These items described an individual's beliefs. Examples included: "I think I should not ask for more than what I have"; "I believe that people should be satisfied with what they have"; "I believe it is better to do things in traditional ways"; and "It is important to follow the customs one has learned". Values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .72 and .66, respectively.

*Universalism* was measured with six items that focused on equality, world peace, justice and environmental protection. Examples were: "I think it is important that every person in the world should be treated equally"; "I think justice is necessary for everybody, even for people I don't know"; and "It is important for me to adapt to nature and to fit into it. I believe that people should not change nature". The response scales were also adapted from Schwartz (2003). Values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .89 and .77, respectively.

*Hostile intent attribution* was assessed with two items that focused on the perception that an out-group intended to harm the in-group. The items described the strength of the perceived intention to harm within the Chinese and Japanese samples. Examples included: "Japanese always embarrass Chinese on purpose" and "The behaviours of the Japanese reflect malicious intentions towards China". The value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for both the Chinese and Japanese samples was .87.

*Support for aggressive policies* was measured with three items derived from research on Japan–China relations (Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012). The items described the strength of perceived victimhood within the Chinese and Japanese samples. An example was: “If Japan has aggressive intentions toward China, I should consider pre-emptive action”. Values for Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .63 and .80, respectively.

After completing the questionnaire, participants were asked to fill out their age, sex and nationality details. They could subsequently share their opinions freely with us.

### 2.3 Results

Table 2-1 Means and standard deviations of measured variables for the Chinese and Japanese samples

| Variable                        | Chinese ( <i>N</i> = 202) |      | Japanese ( <i>N</i> = 256) |      |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|
|                                 | M                         | SD   | M                          | SD   |
| Traditionalism                  | 3.41                      | .80  | 3.03                       | .70  |
| Universalism                    | 4.06                      | .84  | 4.05                       | .63  |
| Symbolic threat                 | 2.26                      | .94  | 2.28                       | .84  |
| Realistic threat                | 2.44                      | .95  | 3.03                       | .76  |
| Hostile intent attribution      | 3.28                      | 1.08 | 2.88                       | 1.14 |
| Support for aggressive policies | 4.24                      | .78  | 2.74                       | 1.01 |

Although correlations between some of the variables were not strong in the Chinese sample (for example,  $r = .14$  and  $p < .10$  for traditionalism and realistic threat), almost all of our expected relations were significantly correlated. The uncorrelated relation between universalism and realistic threat in the Japanese sample was exceptional. The results of the intercorrelations are shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2. Intercorrelations between measured variables for the Chinese and Japanese samples

|                                    | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Traditionalism                  | —     | .35** | .17*  | .14†  | .25** | .13†  |
| 2. Universalism                    | .23** | —     | -.17* | -.16* | -.01  | .08   |
| 3. Symbolic threat                 | .22** | -.14* | —     | .65** | .34** | .13†  |
| 4. Realistic threat                | .17** | -.01  | .50** | —     | .31** | .06   |
| 5. Hostile intent attribution      | .11†  | -.04  | .57** | .38** | —     | .41** |
| 6. Support for aggressive policies | .24** | -.06  | .40** | .34** | .38** | —     |

*Note.* Correlations were above the diagonal for the Chinese sample and below the diagonal for the Japanese sample.

\*\* $p < .01$ ; \* $p < .05$ ; † $p < .10$

To test my model and examine its compatibility, I conducted structural equation modelling using the Amos program in the SPSS 17.0 package. I also conducted a multi-group path analysis to compare implementation of the same model for the Chinese and Japanese samples. I tested my hypothesis that the antecedents (traditionalism and universalism) effect hostile intent attribution via symbolic and realistic threats. The modified model and the relationship between the variables are presented in Figure 2-1 which shows that there was a good fit between the model and the data ( $\chi^2 = 39.74$ ,  $df = 12$ , GFI = .97, AGFI = .90, NFI = .92, CFI = .94, RMSEA

= .07). I can explain the relationship between the variables based on the proposed model.

Figure 2-1 shows that for both the Chinese and Japanese samples, traditionalism had a positive relation with symbolic threat ( $\beta = .26, p < .001$ ;  $\beta = .27, p < .001$ , respectively) as well as with realistic threat ( $\beta = .22, p < .01$ ;  $\beta = .19, p < .01$ , respectively). Conversely, universalism was negatively associated with both symbolic threat ( $\beta = -.27, p < .001$ ;  $\beta = -.20, p < .01$ , respectively) and realistic threat ( $\beta = -.24, p < .01$ ;  $\beta = -.05, n.s.$ , respectively) for these two samples. Symbolic threat was positively associated with hostile intent attribution in both the Chinese and Japanese samples ( $\beta = .34, p < .001$ ;  $\beta = .45, p < .001$ , respectively). Realistic threat was positively associated with hostile intent attribution in the Japanese sample ( $\beta = .13, p < .05$ ), but not in the Chinese sample ( $\beta = .15, p < .10$ ). Traditionalism and universalism both showed a significant positive correlation ( $r = .35, p < .001$ ;  $r = .23, p < .001$ , respectively) in the Chinese and Japanese samples. Furthermore, a positive correlation was found between symbolic and realistic threats ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ;  $r = .48, p < .001$ , respectively) for the two samples. Multi-group path analysis was thus a useful method for comparing paths in different models. An absolute value greater than 1.96 suggested a significant difference at  $p < .05$ . Comparison of the results of the two models showed that the symbolic threat path predicted hostile intent attribution is difference. The path's absolute value was 3.19.

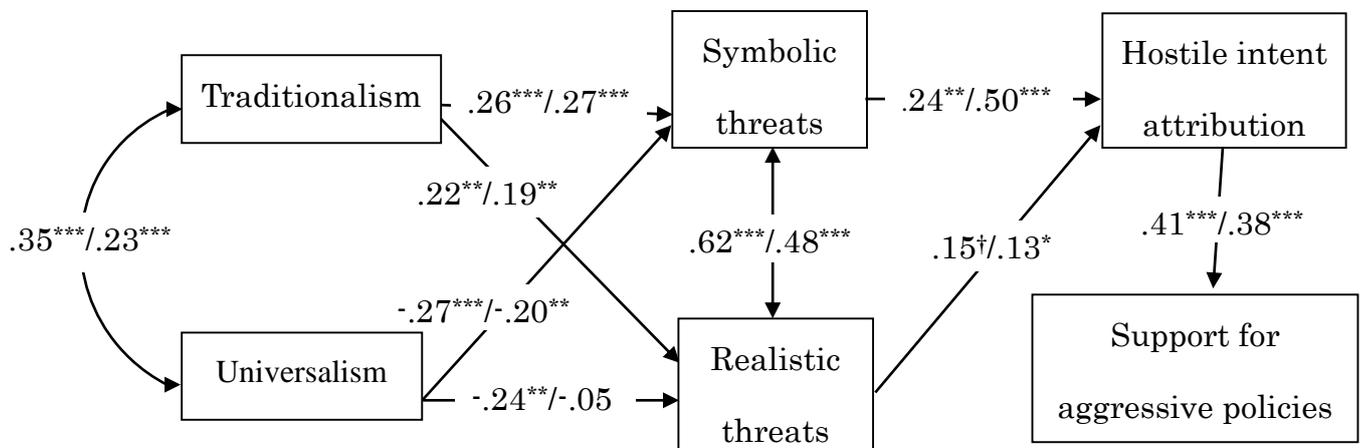


Figure 2-1. Multi-Group path analysis for the Chinese and Japanese samples  
*Note.* The left and right standardised paths relate to the Chinese and Japanese samples, respectively.

*Note:*  $^{***} p < .001$ ;  $^{**} p < .01$ ;  $^{*} p < .05$ ;  $^{\dagger} p < .10$

## 2.4 Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the values of traditionalism and universalism and hostile intent attribution. Furthermore, it aimed to confirm the role of perceived threats in the relationships between traditionalism, universalism and hostile intent attribution, as well as verify that hostile intent attribution predicts support for aggressive policies. The results of this study were generally in line with my predictions. First, traditionalism predicted hostile intent attribution via symbolic threat. However, universalism reduced perceptions of symbolic threat within both the Chinese and Japanese samples. I did not find any effect for realistic threats within the two samples. In partial accordance with

our prediction, universalism predicted realistic threat for the Chinese sample, but not for the Japanese one. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were thus partially supported. Second, hostile intent attribution predicted support for aggressive policies within both samples.

#### *2.4.1 Findings*

The first key finding of the study was that the value of traditionalism appeared to be a predictor of hostile intent attribution via symbolic threats within both the Chinese and Japanese samples. Traditionalism entails a conservative motivation (Schwartz, 2012) that makes it difficult for people to accept out-groups (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995). These results suggest that a higher level of traditionalism entails a greater responsibility to protect the original in-group culture. People with this sense of mission will be constantly vigilant against out-groups who may bring in change. In a confrontation between countries with different cultural contexts, traditionalism may reflect greater anxiety or the fear that each country will destroy the national value system and well-being of the other. Therefore, a high degree of traditionalism leads to a high level of perceived threats. Perceived threats seem to capture the perception of hostility and serve as important variables in the association between traditionalism and hostile intent attribution. This study's findings suggest that traditionalism is a key factor underlying negative intergroup relationships.

Second, universalism predicted hostile intent attribution through symbolic threats in both samples. It also predicted realistic threats within

the Chinese sample. These results imply that universalism could reduce a sense of hostility by weakening perceived threats, particularly symbolic threats. Universalism encourages acceptance of out-groups and even the possibility of individuals or groups sacrificing their own interests for the sake of others (Schwartz, 2007, 2010). In contrast to traditionalism, strong universalism is likely to promote positive intergroup relationships. My investigation provided evidence that supports this viewpoint. This is an important finding that can help to establish positive intergroup relations when a desire to repair these relations exists.

Third, in both samples showed that the impacts of traditionalism and universalism on hostile intent attribution through symbolic threats but not realistic threats. According to the intergroup context, different types of threats have differential impacts on prejudice held towards out-groups (Stephen & Stephen, 1996). In fact, many empirical studies have endorsed this view. For example, in the context of the Netherlands, González et al. (2008) found that prejudice was associated with symbolic threats, but not with realistic threats. By contrast, in the Israeli context, Bizman and Yinon (2001) found that realistic but not symbolic threats predicted prejudice. The findings of the current study, in the context of China and Japan, are that symbolic threats are more significantly associated with hostile intent attribution compared with realistic threats. The reason for this may be that each of these societies, viewing the other as an out-group, perceives differences in values and culture, rather than physical intimidation, as threatening. Consequently, they are more inclined to readily characterise the

out-group as being hostile towards the in-group. Thus, for the Chinese and Japanese people, the perception of threat posed by different values and beliefs may increase the negative feelings they hold towards each other as out-groups.

Furthermore, as the results show, symbolic threats are more significantly associated with hostile intent attribution in the Japanese context compared with the Chinese context. Thus, in the context of Japan and China, our study has produced evidence in support of the viewpoint that different types of threats lead to differential prejudice towards out-groups. It has also demonstrated that the same type of threat predicts different levels of reflection towards out-groups.

Last, the results indicate that hostile intent attribution predicted support for aggressive policies within both samples. As discussed in the earlier section on theory, hostile intent attribution has been associated with aggressive behaviour (Matthews & Norris, 2002; Tremblay & Belchevski, 2004). However, empirical studies investigating the relationship between hostile intent attribution and aggressive behaviour in the intergroup context remain limited. As indicated by our results, hostile intent attribution significantly explains support for aggressive policies towards out-groups. My study thus contributes to the literature by demonstrating that hostile intent attribution is an explanatory factor in relation to intergroup conflict.

#### *2.4.2 Theoretical implications*

The findings of this comparative study have some important theoretical implications. First, to the best of my knowledge, my study is the first to examine the relationship between basic human values and hostile intent attribution. It demonstrates that values can promote and, conversely, reduce a particular intergroup attitude. This finding helps to extend the literature on intergroup relationships from a new perspective. Second, I applied integrated threat theory to propose a detailed psychological process. My study indicates that perceived threat is an important explanatory mechanism in the relationship between the values of traditionalism and universalism and hostile intent attribution. It, therefore, advances understanding of why traditionalism predicts negative attitudes towards out-groups, while universalism predicts positive attitudes towards them. Third, as the samples in this study were from China and Japan, these findings can deepen my understanding of conflicts between these countries. By applying the theory of perceived threats in our study, I was able to explain some aspects of the relationship between China and Japan. I discuss these in detail below.

#### *2.4.3 Practical implications*

The practical implications of our findings for enhancing understanding of the China–Japan relationship are as follows. First, the results indicate that traditionalism tended to predict perceived threats within both the Chinese and Japanese samples, while universalism had the potential to improve this intergroup relationship. These two contrasting

value types can, however, coexist within human value systems. Thus, I suggest that in combination with retention of traditional beliefs or ideas, it is important to strengthen universalism by expanding consciousness of human welfare, or of the natural environment. My findings further suggest that hostile intent attribution predicts support for aggressive policies as an important psychological process and, ultimately, a deteriorating relationship between China and Japan. Cultural exchange should, therefore, be promoted to increase mutual understanding and reduce the perception of hostile intent.

#### *2.4.4 Limitations and directions for future research*

This study has three major limitations. First, like other correlational studies, it could not provide definitive conclusions regarding causation between the variables. It is difficult to ascertain whether perceived threats predict traditionalism, or whether perceived threats precede hostile intent attribution. Thus, it is necessary for a future experimental design to provide this evidence. Second, I only obtained samples from China and Japan. Further exploration is, therefore, needed on whether my proposed model can be applied more generally to the psychological processes of other nations. I recommend obtaining samples of cross-cultural participants within future studies to examine the generalisability of this model. Third, the present study focused on relationships among values (traditionalism/universalism), perceived threats (realistic/symbolic), hostile intent attribution and support for aggressive policies. However, extended research is required to test other

types of values, such as benevolence and conformity, and other types of threats, such as stereotypes, as well as their relationships to perceived threats.

## Chapter 3

### *Study II*

Hostile intent attribution as mediator of  
the relation between nationalism and  
emotion

### **Abstract of Chapter 3**

This study used Chinese ( $N = 199$ ) and Japanese ( $N = 254$ ) samples to test the mediated effect of perceived intention to harm the in-group on the relationship between nationalism and intergroup emotion. Firstly, results indicated that nationalism predicted anger via perceived intention to harm the in-group. Second, the results showed that nationalism predicted fear via intention to harm the in-group in both samples. The implications of the results are discussed.

### **3.1 Introduction of study II**

Psychologists have devoted relatively little attention to the role of emotion in the duration and resolution of inter-group conflicts (for example: Neuberg, & Cottrell, 2002; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Nawata, & Yamaguchi, 2012; Horowitz, 1985; Lindner, 2006; Petersen, 2002). Inter-group emotion theory (Mackie et al., 2000) has been used to explain inter-group behavior in recent years. Inter-group emotion theory is built by a combination of two psychological perspectives appraising emotion (Frijal, 1986) and argues that emotion arises from the appraisal of events related to personal self or their group, and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). When group membership is salient, group members respond emotionally to the situations or events related to the in-group. Different events evoke different emotions, and different emotions are used to explain a greater variety of out-group behaviors. The present study focuses on two salient inter-group emotions that play a determinative role in explaining offensive action tendencies in inter-group context: anger and fear. Anger and fear are primary negative emotions that are evoked in response to situations of threat and danger.

Anger is defined as a primary aversive emotion that arises in situations of perceived unfairness, unjustifiability, and when acceptable norms are broken (Roseman, 1974; Scherer, Schorr, Johnstone, 2001). Anger is elicited easily when people believe that other individuals' or groups' wrong actions should be corrected and they insist their actions are corrective (Haipherin, & Gross, 2010). Indeed, behaviorally, anger is usually associated

with aggressive behavior and with a willingness to support confrontational-oriented public policies when dealing with threatening situations (Neuberg & Cottrell, 2002; Mackie et al., 2000; Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012). For example, Skitka, Bauman, Aramovich, & Morgan (2006) found that the people who responded to the 9/11 terrorists with anger tended to be more supportive of the expansion of the war toward the out-group. Anger is particularly related to increased risk taking, intolerant attitudes, and decreased inter-group forgiveness (Tam, Hewstone, Cairns, Tausch, Maio, & Kenworthy, 2007).

In contrary to anger, fear is the emotion that leads to cognitive freezing and closed-mindedness (Halperin, Bar-Tal, Nets-Zehngut, & Almog, 2008; Jarymowicz, & Bar-Tal, 2006). Thus, fear is usually associated with approach opposition to the aggressive behavior and a tendency towards avoidance (Frijda, Kuipers, & Ter Schure, 1989; Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012; Dumont, Yzerbyt, Wigboldus, & Gordijin, 2003) . In addition, previous studies have proposed that people who experience fear also tend to be conservative, prejudiced, and intolerant (Duckitt, & Fisher, 2003; Feldman, & Stenner, 1997; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003).

To date, research on antecedents of anger and fear in inter-group relations has demonstrated the role of contextual factors and cognitive appraisals of specific events through laboratory settings and focused on short-term and long-term contributions (Haipherin, & Gross, 2010). However, few studies have focused on the specific content of appraisals of inter-group conflicts that easily evoked inter-group emotions, and on how to examine

whether these appraisals effect the group members' emotion or not. Based on these questions, I considered it necessary to focus on inter-group beliefs that were shaped by perceived past inter-group conflicts to explain inter-group emotions. For instance, Nawata and Yamaguch (2012) found that when Japanese believed they were victims and Chinese were perpetrators in the conflicts with China, anger and fear were elicited in response to the Chinese. The present study will use hostile intent attribution to examine the potential contribution of negative belief factors to the development of these emotions.

The goal of the present study is to test the relationship between anger and fear, and hostile intent attribution. Furthermore, I use hostile intent attribution theory to explain why differences in nationalism and patriotism lead to different emotions toward out-groups.

### *3.1.1 Nationalism and inter-group emotions*

According to social identity theory (Tajfel, & Turner, 1986), group members tend to positively evaluate the group to which they belong. In social psychology, national identity is described as the basically positive, subjective attitude toward a nation. National identity stresses the positive emotional bond with a nation. In general, nationalism and patriotism are seen as consequences of national identity, which describe more specific expressions (Blank, & Schmidt, 2003). Nationalism and patriotism both stress “love of nation” and “pride of nation” and they share common features that evaluate the in-group positively (Kosterman, & Feshbach, 1989). The difference between them is that their constructs are differently related to intergroup

attitude.

The patriotism hypothesis maintains that a person is more likely to accept internationalist values and will tend to act in more positive ways toward out-group members, whereas nationalism tends to be less prone to internationalism and instead positively associates with militarism (Kosterman, & Feshbach, 1989). Internally, patriotism may tend towards tolerance of diversity and it can promote a positive attitude toward the out-group, but nationalism is more likely to promote dominance over others and feeling more superior (Nawata, & Yamaguchi, 2012), and tends to encourage intolerance of out-group members (Li, & Brewer, 2004).

Mackie et al. (2000) found that in-group identification was a significant predictor of anger and fear, and Nawata, & Yamaguchi (2012) also found that the group members who showed more nationalism, anger, and fear were more easily provoked in the Japanese context. Empirical studies suggest that when social identity is salient, group members react emotionally toward events related to the in-group (Crisp, Heuston, Farr, & Turner, 2007; Mackie et al., 2000). For example, after the 9/11 terrorist attack, Americans expressed irrational anger and fear. Thus, I hypothesized that people who are more nationalistic would be more inclined to act in a negative emotional manner toward out-group members and that patriotism would not be associated with negative emotions.

### *3.1.2 Hostile intent attribution as mediator*

Furthermore, I hypothesized that hostile intent attribution would

mediate the association between nationalism and anger and fear. Although numerous studies have suggested that social identification can predict inter-group emotions, the psychological processes between them have still been investigated very little. To test the psychological processes of nationalism and negative inter-group emotions, the present study identified the psychological processes underlying the effects of nationalism on inter-group emotions that are mediated by hostile intent attribution.

I propose that hostile intent attribution is directly and positively related to anger and fear. Although appraisal theory was developed by personal emotion experience, it can also be applied to inter-group context (Mackie et al., 2000). The group members elicit inter-group emotions depending on factors that contribute to particular appraisals of the out-group's actions (Mackie et al., 2000). When in-group members perceive that their interests or security is threatened, they might interpret this as out-group members being likely to harm them, and anger and fear are then more likely to be experienced. For instance, Neuberg, & Cottrell (2002) showed that in-group members tend to elicit anger or fear in response to a sense of out-group threat when in-group members perceive their security is threatened. Furthermore, Darley and Pittman (2003) concluded that the more intentional harm is perceived to be, the stronger the emotion of moral outrage. The direct experience with the out-group is the foundation for emotional reactions; when group members evaluate the out-groups' intentions toward the in-group as hostile, negative emotional reactions are triggered against out-group members. Hence, I consider that hostile intent

attribution may predict anger and fear positively.

Second, I also propose that hostile intent attribution may play an important role in mediating nationalism and negative inter-group emotions. Nationalism stresses the feeling of national superiority (Hechter, 2000; Kosterman, & Feshbach, 1989), which is likely to support authoritarianism and degradation of out-group members. Thus, it may be sensitive to inter-group relationships: the trifling matters that occur may encourage nationalism's hostile attribution in response to the sense of hostility. Hence, I expect a positive association between hostile intent attribution and nationalism, but not patriotism, which supports tolerance toward out-groups and minorities in accepting intrasocietal variety (Blank, & Schmidt, 2003). Based on the above statements, we propose the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1: Hostile intent attribution mediates a positive relationship between nationalism and anger*

*Hypothesis 2: Hostile intent attribution mediates a negative relationship between nationalism and fear.*

## **3.2 Method**

### *3.2.1* Participants

To test our hypotheses, I conducted a questionnaire-based survey of population samples belonging to two different cultural contexts. Sample 1 consisted of 199 (63 males, 132 females and 2 participants who did not report their sex) undergraduate students from Chinese Universities. The mean age of the Chinese sample was 19.77 years ( $SD = 1.26$ ). Sample 2 consisted of 254

(113 males, 140 females and 1 participant who did not report their sex) undergraduate students from Japanese Universities. The mean age of the Japanese sample was 19.18 years ( $SD = 1.40$ ). The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire during regular school hours. The questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Prior to the data collection, the first page of the survey was shown to participants, asking for their informed consent, and stating that they were free to drop out at any time while filling out the questionnaire.

### *3.2.2 Measures*

The questionnaire used for the survey included demographic questions as well as measures of nationalism, patriotism, hostile intent attribution, anger, and fear. We applied a back-translation procedure to check that meanings were comparable. All of the questionnaire items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

*Nationalism* was measured with a six-item scale that focused on warmth and competence. Examples were: ‘Compared with other countries, I want to see China (Japan) as a more superior country’ and ‘China (Japan) is one of the most superior nations in the world’. Values for Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .77 and .69, respectively.

*Patriotism* was measured with a seven-item scale. Examples were: ‘I love China (Japan)’, ‘I want to live in China (Japan) all my life’, and ‘China (Japan) is the best country in the world’. Values for Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for the

Chinese and Japanese samples were .78 and .77, respectively.

*Hostile intent attribution* was measured with a two-item scale. Items in the scale included: 'Japanese people always embarrass Chinese people on purpose' and 'The behavior of the Japanese reflect malicious intent towards China'. Values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .87 and .87, respectively.

*Anger* was measured with three items derived from research on Japan–China relations (Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012). The question was 'How do you feel about China (Japan)'. Items in the scale included: 'Angry', 'Annoyed', and 'Irritated'. Values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .69 and .89, respectively.

*Fear* was also measured with three items derived from research on Japan–China relations (Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012). The question was 'How do you feel about China (Japan)'. Items in the scale included: 'Frightening', 'Bloodcurdling', and 'Scary'. Values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the Chinese and Japanese samples were .79 and .86, respectively.

### 3.3 Results

Table 3-1. Deviations of Measured Variables for the Chinese and Japanese samples

| Variable                   | Chinese ( <i>N</i> = 199) |      | Japanese ( <i>N</i> = 254) |      |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|
|                            | M                         | SD   | M                          | SD   |
| Nationalism                | 3.88                      | .76  | 3.10                       | .66  |
| Patriotism                 | 3.80                      | .70  | 3.77                       | .68  |
| Hostile intent attribution | 3.28                      | 1.09 | 2.88                       | 1.13 |
| Anger                      | 2.77                      | .98  | 2.99                       | 1.14 |
| Fear                       | 1.74                      | .83  | 2.94                       | 1.10 |

The correlations between the variables entered in the path analysis were almost in the expected direction. The results of the intercorrelations are shown in Table 3-2. Notably, nationalism and fear were uncorrelated,  $r_s = -.10$  and  $-.01$  for the Chinese sample and Japanese sample, respectively.

Table 3-2. Intercorrelations between Measured Variables for Chinese and Japanese Samples

|                               | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Nationalism                | —     | .58** | .22** | .15*  | -.10  |
| 2. Patriotism                 | .24** | —     | .15*  | .11   | -.18* |
| 3. Hostile intent attribution | .36** | .10   | —     | .43** | .13†  |
| 4. Anger                      | .22** | .16** | .60** | —     | .40** |
| 5. Fear                       | -.01  | -.03  | .29** | .40** | —     |

*Note:* Correlations are shown above the diagonal for the Chinese sample and below the diagonal for the Japanese sample.

*Note.* \*\* $p < .01$ ; \* $p < .05$ ; † $p < .10$

To test my hypotheses, I conducted structural equation modeling using the Amos program in the SPSS 17.0 package. I also conducted a multi-group path analysis to compare the implementation of the same model for the Chinese and Japanese samples. The modified model and the relationship between the variables are presented in Figure 3-1. As predicted, the model provided a good fit to the data:  $\chi^2 = 9.04$ ,  $df = 6$ , GFI = 1, AGFI = .96, NFI = .98, CFI = .99 RMSEA = .03. I can explain the relationship between the variables based on the proposed models. Figure 3-1 showed that for both the Chinese and Japanese samples, hostile intent attribution had a positive relation with anger ( $\beta = .42$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $\beta = .60$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectively). Furthermore, the results also showed that hostile intent attribution was positively associated with fear in both samples ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $p < .05$ ;  $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectively). Nationalism was significantly associated with hostile intent attribution in both the Chinese and Japanese samples ( $\beta = .20$ ,  $p < .05$ ;

$\beta = .35, p < .001$ , respectively). Last, a positive correlation was found between nationalism and patriotism ( $r = .58, p < .001$ ;  $r = .24, p < .001$ , respectively) as well as a correlation between anger and fear ( $r = .39, p < .001$ ;  $r = .31, p < .001$ , respectively) for both samples. Multi-group path analysis was thus a useful method for comparing paths in different models. An absolute value greater than 1.96 suggested a significant difference at  $p < .05$ . A comparison of the results of the two models showed that the nationalism path that predicted hostile intent attribution was different (absolute value was 2.76) from the hostile intent attribution path that predicted anger and fear (absolute values were 2.84 and 2.0, respectively).

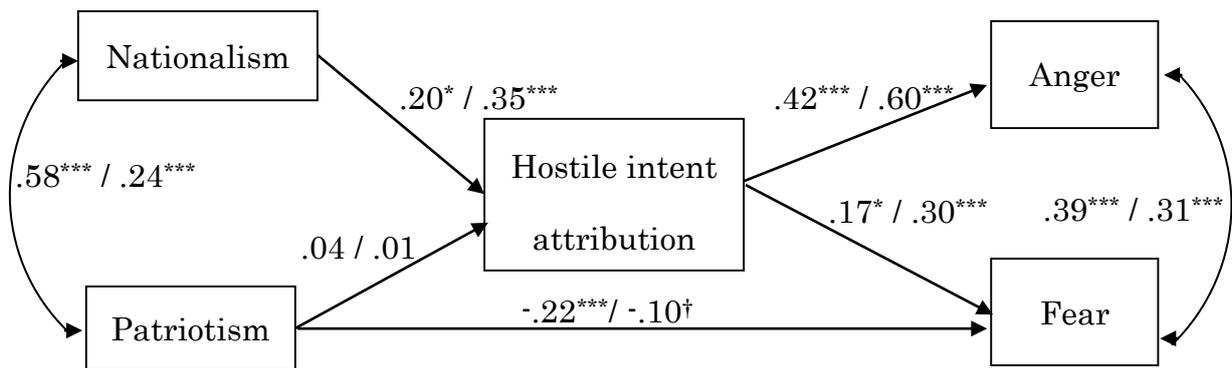


Figure 3-1. Multi-Group path analysis for the Chinese and Japanese samples

*Note.* The left and right standardized paths relate to the Chinese and Japanese samples, respectively.

*Note:* \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; †  $p < .10$

To test mediation effects, I conducted a series of Sobel tests (Baron & Kenny, 1986). As shown in Table 3-3, the mediation effect of hostile intent attribution in the relationship between nationalism and anger ( $z = 2.27, p$

< .05;  $z = 5.51$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was evident for the Chinese and Japanese samples, respectively. The Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 3-3. Sobel Tests for Mediated Relationships

| Predictor   | Mediator              | Criterion | Chinese<br>z-test | Chinese<br>p-value | Japanese<br>z-test | Japanese<br>p-value |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|             | Hostile               |           |                   |                    |                    |                     |
| Nationalism | intent<br>attribution | Anger     | 2.27              | .02*               | 5.51               | .000***             |

*Note.* \*\*\* $p < .01$ ; \* $p < .05$

### 3.4 Discussion

The primary purpose of this chapter was to examine the relationship between nationalism and inter-group emotions via hostile intent attribution. Although previous studies (see Mackie et al., 2000) have demonstrated the association of social identity and inter-group emotions, to our knowledge, few studies have investigated its psychological processes. Furthermore, it aimed to confirm the role of hostile intent attribution as mediator of the relationship between nationalism and anger, as well showing hostile intent attribution as a mediator in the relationship between nationalism and fear. The results of this study were partly in line with my predictions.

#### 3.4.1 Findings

First, my results confirm the important role of hostile intent attribution for anger. Anger, a seemingly inevitable consequence of inter-group conflicts, was associated with hostile intent attribution positively

in both samples. Hostile intent attribution as a predictor explains anger at the group level. In this paper, hostile intent attribution was defined as the perception of confidence in the out-group's hostility attitude toward the in-group. The results suggest that the salience of the perception of out-group members' behavior tendencies can drive conclusions about anger.

Second, empirical research has proposed that the concepts of nationalism and patriotism are plausibly differentiated. On the basis of this information, I try to explore the question of whether identification with one's own nation is connected with negative beliefs toward out-group or negative emotions. Both the Chinese sample and the Japanese sample explored whether nationalism was associated with hostile intent attribution, but I did not find any association between patriotism and hostile intent attribution. Mummendy & Klink (2001) have demonstrated that nationalism is associated with a negative attitude toward the out-group. Blank & Schmidt (2003) also found that nationalism leads to the denigration of out-group members, yet contrary to nationalism, patriotism has been associated with a tolerant attitude toward out-group members. Furthermore, Ljujic, Vedder, Dekker, & Geel (2012) demonstrated that nationalists easily perceive the out-group as threatening the in-group's interests. One reason may be that nationalists have the tendency to dominate out-group members (Vekaaik, 2012). Thus, nationalists are more likely to reject out-group members and are more sensitive to inter-group relations. When nationalists perceive that the in-group's status or authority is possibly threatened, they may attribute the out-group's malevolent intent to the competitiveness of out-groups.

Third, the evidence indicates that hostile intent attribution can mediate the impact of nationalism and anger at the group level. Hostile intent attribution is increasingly being considered as a group-level phenomenon, particularly in relation to conflict. My results show that, in part, inter-group emotion is dependent on group-level hostile intent attribution, furthermore, based on national identity, hostile intent attribution can be considered as a group-level phenomenon in the inter-group setting, which is facilitated by nationalism. Nationalism effects anger via hostile intent attribution. Thus, I can confirm the mediated effect of hostile intent attribution in this study.

Fourth, hostile intent attribution is an important factor to predict the emotion of fear for both samples. When Chinese and Japanese subjects perceived that out-group members had a malevolent intent toward them, fear was evoked. I note, however, that nationalism was indirect, that is, there was no direct effect on fear (see table 1). A possible explanation for this result is that there might be unidentified suppressors, not controlled in my study, which intervened in the effect of hostile intent attribution on fear. If the reason is the conjecture that I proposed, the resulting consequence of this study is that the power of nationalism to effect fear may be somewhat reduced. More research is required to better understand the trajectory of fear and hostile intent attribution change following an identity intervention.

Finally, as the results show, the associations of nationalism and hostile intent attribution, hostile intent attribution and anger, and hostile intent attribution and fear were more significant in the Japanese context

than the Chinese context. The possible explanations for these results are that differences in cultural context or group status lead to these different results. For instance, Ljujic et al. (2012) found that compared to the Dutch, Serbian people perceived economic threat more easily because of their unfavorable economic situation. These patterns of results may reflect the different social status of Japan as a small territory and population, and China as a “big country” which covers vast territories and encompasses a large population. In this striking contrary situation, Chinese nationalism may not be specifically sensitive to inter-group relations, while in the case of Japanese nationalism they may feel pressure from China more easily. Thus, the same factor may structure the same psychological process in cross culture; however, these psychological paths’ values were different because of differences in inter-group contexts. Further research is needed in order to understand which factors lead to these psychological paths’ differences.

#### *3.4.2 Theoretical implications*

First, hostile intent attribution plays an integral part in the explaining of conflicts. However, despite the importance of hostile intent attribution for areas of conflict, empirical research on the construct of group level is lacking. The present data suggest that hostile intent attribution is one factor that arouses anger and fear toward out-group for perceived past conflicts.

Second, to explore hostile intent attribution at the group level, I used a measure of hostile intent attribution that examined factors beyond

personalized trauma on the individual level. Furthermore, the present study used hostile intent attribution as mediator to demonstrate the relationship between nationalism and inter-group negative emotions. Whereas previous studies have shown the impact of social identity on inter-group emotions (see Mackie et al., 2000), I have extended this research to empirically demonstrate their association with hostile intent attribution.

Third, empirical research has demonstrated the different characteristics between nationalism and patriotism and indicated that patriotism is not associated with the denigration of out-groups (Schatz, & Staub, 1997), but that nationalism is associated with anti-out-group feelings (Blank, & Schmidt, 2003). The present chapter documents that nationalism can affect emotions (anger and fear) through hostile intent attribution. Anger and fear are considered to have a negative influence on inter-group relations (see Neuberg & Cottrell, 2002; Frijda et al., 1989); through the present study I can understand why nationalism is associated with a negative attitude toward out-group, but patriotism is not.

### *3.4.3 Limitations and future research*

Finally, I acknowledge three limitations of this study. First, I note that the criterion measures looked at cognitive emotions rather than the psychological arousal of emotion. Generally, emotion is evoked by certain specific events, and an individual's physiological emotions are aroused by their evaluation of these events. In the present study, rather than looking into psychological emotion, I investigated people's perception of real-life

experiences of inter-group emotions. This methodological issue needs to be revised. In view of this situation, I will discuss the relationship between hostile intent attribution and anger through a concrete event in the next Chapter.

Second, this study relied on cross-sectional data, making it difficult to establish causality in the present models. Although hostile intent attribution fully mediated the variables of nationalism and anger, it is still difficult for me to conclude that hostile intent attribution causes inter-group emotion, or that nationalism causes hostile intent attribution. It is also possible that when group members perceived the out-groups' hostility, consequently, nationalism was strengthened, or that when group members experienced inter-group negative emotion, they formed beliefs of hostile intent attribution. Future studies should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to determine the definitive direction of these paths.

Third, future research is needed to determine whether the reduction of hostile intent attribution can promote positive emotions for inter-group relations, such as promoting inter-group forgiveness. Future studies should investigate the relations between hostile intent attribution and other potential variables such as happiness and collective guilt, which have been proven to be associated with inter-group forgiveness.

## Chapter 4

### *Study III*

The mediating effects of collective responsibility on the relation between hostile intent attribution and intergroup anger

#### **Abstract of Chapter 4**

The current chapter is still concerned with the China-Japan relation and examines the relationship of hostile intent attribution and collective responsibility. I proposed a model of hostile intent attribution wherein hostile intent attribution increases collective responsibility attribution, which in turn is associated with the emotion of anger. Japanese University students ( $N = 242$ ) completed measures of hostile intent attribution, responsibility judgment, and anger. Participants who perceived that all the members of a group must be responsible for some members of that group's wrongdoing were more likely to promote the emotion of anger. The results indicate that hostile intent attribution increased anger via collective responsibility judgment.

#### **4.1 Introduction of study III**

In Chapter 3, I demonstrated that hostile intent attribution could arouse inter-group level negative emotions. However, as I have noted, Emotion is evoked by certain specific events, and individuals' physiological emotions are aroused by their evaluation of these events. Thus, in the present chapter, I will test the relationship between hostile intent attribution and psychological emotion of anger through a specific event. Furthermore, despite the apparent relationship between hostile intent attribution and anger shown in chapter 3, in order to demonstrate the psychological process between hostile intent attribution and anger, the present chapter will focus on attribution theory, which explains why a particular outcome has occurred (Heider, 1958).

##### *4.1.1 Responsibility judgment*

Inter-group conflicts are generally characterized by cycles of violence in which each group was both a victim as well as a perpetrator. After the conflicts have ceased, the conflicts still continue to influence the psychology of the individual group members (Tam, Kenworthy, Cairns, Marinetti, Geddes, & Parkinson, 2008). Understanding how groups construe the inter-group conflicts is important for understanding intergroup conflicts (Doosje, et al, 2007) and resolution (Celebi, Verkuyten, Köse, & Maliepaard, 2014; Kelman, 2005). For instance, when in-group members see that their group is responsible for harm done to others, it motivates the intergroup relations repair (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998; Lickel,

Schmader, Curtis, Scanier, & Ames, 2005). However, when intergroup conflicts occur, group members often downplay or deny their responsibility for the conflicts (Bar-tel, 2000), and attribute blame to the out-group, which can result in in-group members' negative response toward relative out-groups (Licata, Klein, Saade, Azzi, & Branscombe, 2011).

Members of each group may tend to depict the out-group as being responsible for the harm doing, even though the in-group members also engaged in violence. For example, Doosje, Zebal, Scheermeijer, and Mathyi (2007) found that Islamic people attributed less responsibility to the Islamic world responsible for terrorist attacks. Indeed, Ra, Cha, Hyun, and Bae (2013) have demonstrated that responsibility judgment includes selfish motivation, which tends to assume that offenses had a negative intent and were blameworthy. Thus, collective responsibility judgment can not only continue the inter-group conflict, it can also move the aggression from the personal level to the inter-group level. For instance, vicarious retribution is seen as the result of collective blame (Lickel, Miller, Stenstrom, Denson, & Schamader, 2006). Group members' judgment that the out-group as a whole is responsible for the event is what I here call collective responsibility judgment. Denson, Lickel, Curtis, Stenstrom, and Ames (2006) have proposed that out-group members who share group membership with provocateurs are easily targeted for collective blame. I believe that the investigation of responsibility judgment is important because of its potential to significantly advance our understanding of the psychological processes of hostile intent attribution and inter-group anger. Thus, the present chapter

addresses the question: how do group members, through collective responsibility, justify negative emotional impulses toward the other out-group members who were not necessarily responsible for their shared out-group members' individual transgression? In the present chapter, I first review theories of responsibility judgment, hostile intent attribution, and emotion of anger. Based on this theoretical review, I develop hypotheses for the relation among the variables. I then test our hypotheses using the results of surveys conducted in Japan. In the final section of the paper, based on my statistical analysis and discussion of the survey results, I examine the study's implications and propose a future research agenda.

The research of responsibility judgment at the inter-group level has primarily focused on who should be responsible for the error (Pettigrew, 1979). The previous literature has divided responsibility judgment into two types: target of responsibility and types of responsibility. I will examine my hypotheses through the target of responsibility type, which is drawn from the mechanism identified Baumeister and Hastings (1997). The general focus is on who should be responsible for the conflict. According to the previous study, in-group blaming can promote inter-group reconciliation, and out-group blaming can lead to lasting inter-group conflicts (Licata et al., 2011). However, when group members attribute themselves should responsible for the conflict, it might reduce the perceived conflict between the in-group and the out-group (Bilali, Tropp, & Dasgupta, 2012). For instance, Çelebi, Verkuyten, Köse, and Maliepaard (2014) have showthat when Turks attributed responsibility to the Kurds, it led to less trust of

Kurds, but when they attributed responsibility to a third party, it promoted higher trust of Kurds. Thus, in the current chapter, I will use the paradigm of responsibility theory by assessing collective responsibility judgment, in-group responsibility judgment, and external responsibility judgment.

#### *4.1.2 Hostile intent attribution and responsibility*

As I mentioned before, inter-group hostile intent attribution was conducted by past hostile experience, such as a long-term history of inter-group conflicts. Group members' knowledge about relative out-groups through past memory shows that when the situation was ambiguous, the group members' implicit theories toward the out-group may cause a more hostile view of the out-groups' traits. When out-group members contribute directly to "hostile intent toward in-group," that affects the in-group treatment of out-groups, and frames group members' interpretations of inter-group events in their social world. As a result, the beliefs of hostile intent attribution play a role in shaping group members' judgments. According to essentiality theory, when people's behaviors were seen as emanating from their groups' traits, they may be likely to conclude that the whole of the out-group is responsible for their group members' personal behaviors. Indeed, empirical studies have shown that when group members use the traits of an out-group as an explanatory mechanism by attributing features of the out-group to all its members, group members may be likely to consider that the wrongdoer's group should be blamed for a group member's wrongdoing (Derson, Lickel, Curtis, Stenstrom, & Ames, 2006). Thus, it is

reasonable for me to believe that perceiving that all the out-group members have the intention to harm the in-group would influence the group members' responsibility judgments.

I use the hostile intent attribution framework to study group member differences in judging the responsibility of the out-group members' crimes towards the in-group. I predict that the more group members perceive the relative out-groups have hostile intent toward them, the more they tend to judge the whole of the out-group as responsible for the out-group members' personal wrongdoings. More specifically, group members who perceive less hostile intent attribution would be less likely to blame the crime on the whole of the out-group but rather see the crime as an out-group person-specific behavior.

#### *4.1.3 Intergroup anger and responsibility judgment*

Anger is a key determinant for inter-group aggression. Past research found that higher attributed responsibility to the out-group was associated with trusting the out-group (Celebi et al., 2014) and the individual's perception of justice less (Au, Hui, & Leung, 2001). Thus, the present chapter aims to demonstrate that responsibility judgment arouses the emotion of anger toward the out-group. Responsibility judgment is concerned with who is accountable and should be blamed for the event (Ra, Cha, Hyun, & Bae, 2013). According to the responsibility judgment hypothesis, acknowledgment of in-group members or in-group responsibility facilitates sympathy toward out-group, while placing responsibility with out-group members or the whole

out-group increases anger. This hypothesis has been supported by Rudolph, Roesch, Greitemeyer, & Weiner's (2004) meta-analytic review. Furthermore, Weiner's (1980) model, which consistently showed that the relationship between responsibility judgment and attitudes and behavior (or behavioral intentions) was mediated by anger. In addition, Halperin (2011) has also shown that collective blame is associated with inter-group anger. When the entire out-group is considered to be responsible for an inter-group crime, this may elicit the in-group's anger in response to the negative event. Conversely, if the out-group was considered as not necessarily responsible for the out-group members' personal behavior, then the anger toward the whole of the out-group would be avoided. Thus, I consider collective responsibility judgment as playing an important role in fueling anger.

In addition, the hostile intent attribution could predict inter-group anger as shown in Chapter 3. In the present chapter, I will illuminate how individual group member's actions can lead to anger through demonstrating the role of responsibility judgment and hostile intent attribution in inter-group relations. I will provide a Chinese transgression that occurred in Japan, and Japanese participants will judge who should be held responsible for the transgression. This study divides responsibility into six types, including responsibility of bank of credit card, responsibility of police, responsibility of assailants, responsibility of victims, responsibility of China (collective responsibility judgment), and responsibility of Japan. I expected attributed responsibility of China to be related to hostile intent attribution, and other types of responsibilities not to be related to hostile intent

attribution. Furthermore, hostile intent attribution can predict the emotion of anger via collective responsibility judgment. Based on the statements above, I propose the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1: collective responsibility judgment partly mediates the relation between hostile intent attribution and anger; the other kinds of responsibility will not mediate the relation between hostile intent attribution and anger.*

*Hypothesis 2: hostile intent attribution can predict anger directly.*

## **4.2 Method**

### *4.2.1 Participants*

A sample of 242 Japanese University students participated in the survey-based study, which took place at universities in Japan. Based on self-report, the sample consisted of 73 males and 165 females. Four students did not report gender. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 37 years. The mean age of the whole sample was 19.6 ( $SD = 4.26$ ).

Prior to the data collection, the first page of the survey was shown to participants, asking for their informed consent, and stating that they were free to drop out at any time while filling out the questionnaire.

### *4.2.2 Measures*

The questionnaire used for the survey included demographic questions as well as measures of hostile intent attribution, responsibility judgment, and anger.

*Responsibility judgment:* As the crime, I chose a Chinese theft described in the ASAHI SHINBUN (a Japanese newspaper). The content of the article concerned Chinese people living in Japan and using other people's credit cards to buy electrical appliances and then selling them online. The participants were asked to read the theft news, rate the amount of perceived responsibility of (1) Bank of credit card; (2) The police; (3) The assailants; (4) China (included two items: "China" and "the whole of China," Cronbach's alpha: .83); (5) The victims; (6) Japan (included two items: "Japan" and "the whole of Japan," Cronbach's alpha: .78).

*Hostile intent attribution* was assessed with two items that focused on the perception that an out-group intended to harm the in-group. The items adapted from Huang et al, (2015). The items described the strength of the perceived intention to harm within the Chinese and Japanese samples. Examples included: "Chinese always embarrass Japanese on purpose" and "The behaviours of the Chinese reflect malicious intentions towards Japan". The cronbach's alphas were .86.

*Anger* was measured with three items derived from research on Japan–China relations (Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012). The question was 'How do you feel about this transgression'. Items in the scale include: 'Angry', 'Annoyed', and 'irritated'. Values for Cronbach's  $\alpha$  were .88.

After completing the questionnaire, participants were asked to fill out their age, sex, and nationality. They could subsequently share their opinions freely with me.

### 4.3 Results

The variable correlations presented in Table 4-1 provide initial support for the hypotheses. Notable are the significant relationships between hostile intent attribution and anger ( $r = .27, p < .01$ ) and between hostile intent attribution and Chinese responsibility judgment ( $r = .35, p < .01$ ). Moreover, Chinese responsibility judgment was positively associated with anger ( $r = .29, p < .01$ ). Based on these results, I can test the mediated effects of Chinese responsibility judgment.

Table 4-1. Means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations between measured variables

| Variables                           | M    | SD   | 1 | 2   | 3     | 4                | 5     | 6     | 7     | 8     |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|---|-----|-------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Hostile intent attribution       | 3.14 | 1.08 | — | .04 | .09   | .19**            | .35** | .01   | .07   | .26** |
| 2. Bank of credit card              | 3.21 | 1.64 |   | —   | .42** | .12 <sup>†</sup> | .17** | .30** | .29** | .09   |
| 3. The police                       | 2.64 | 1.54 |   |     | —     | -.02             | .27** | .36** | .42** | .16*  |
| 4. The assailants                   | 6.31 | 1.39 |   |     |       | —                | -.06  | -.05  | -.10  | .13*  |
| 5. Chinese responsibility judgment  | 3.21 | 1.79 |   |     |       |                  | —     | .25** | .41** | .28** |
| 6. The victims                      | 2.98 | 1.68 |   |     |       |                  |       | —     | .39** | .02   |
| 7. Japanese responsibility judgment | 2.49 | 1.39 |   |     |       |                  |       |       | —     | .14*  |
| 8. Anger                            | 3.19 | 1.14 |   |     |       |                  |       |       |       | —     |

Note: \*\* $p < .01$ ; \* $p < .05$ ; <sup>†</sup> $p < .10$

### 4.3.1 Path model

In this section, I present tests of the fit of the hypothesis model. I conducted structural equation modeling using the Amos program in the SPSS 17.0 package. In the tested model, hostile intent attribution served as the predictor; responsibility judgment was the mediating variable; anger toward out-group was the dependent variable. As predicted, the model presented in Figure 4-1 provided a good fit to the data: ( $\chi^2 = 1.37$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .51$ , GFI = 1, AGFI = .98, NFI = 1, CFI = 1, RMSEA = .00).

As can be noted, hostile intent attribution was related to anger ( $\beta = .15$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Hostile intent attribution displayed the strongest unique relation with Chinese responsibility judgment ( $\beta = .32$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Hostile intent attribution also displayed significant influences on assailants responsibility judgment ( $\beta = .20$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Chinese responsibility judgment increased anger ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and assailants responsibility judgment intended to be related to anger ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $p < .10$ ). Hostile intent attribution did not display significant influence on the bank of credit card responsibility judgment ( $\beta = .01$ , *n.s.*), the police responsibility judgment ( $\beta = .08$ , *n.s.*), the victims responsibility judgment ( $\beta = .01$ , *n.s.*). Notably, except for assailants' responsibility judgment and Chinese responsibility judgment, hostile intent attribution did not affect the other types of responsibility judgment, and other types of responsibility judgment were also not associated with anger.

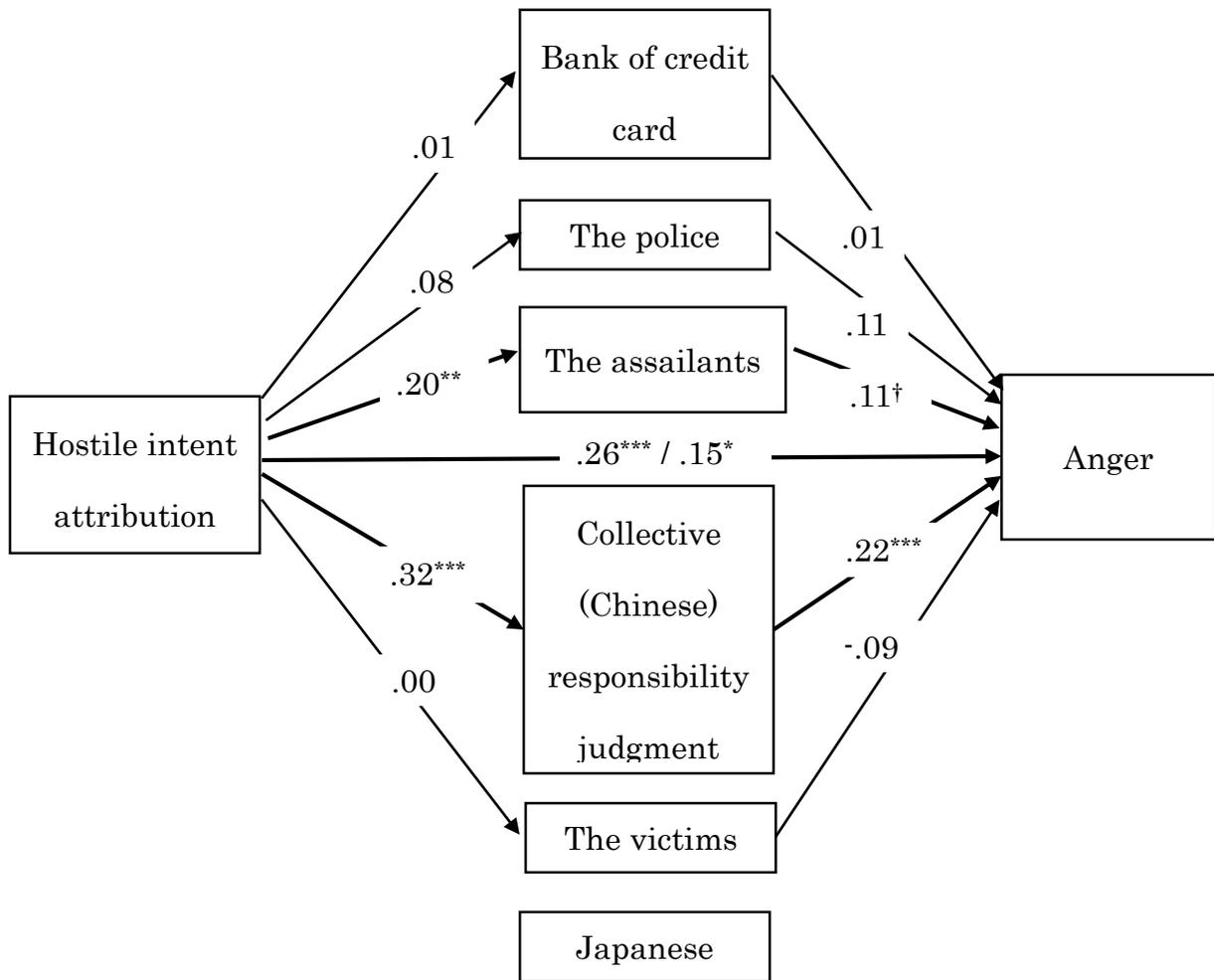


Figure 4-1. Standardized path coefficients for hostile intent attribution predicting collective responsibility and anger.

Note. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; †  $p < .10$

According to the results of hypothesis model, I conducted Sobel tests (Baron & Kenny, 1986). As shown in Table 4-2, the mediation effect of Chinese responsibility judgment in the relation between the hostile intent attribution and anger ( $z = 3.02$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was significant. However, assailants responsibility judgment was not found to mediate the relationship

between hostile intent attribution and anger ( $z = .95, n.s.$ ).

Table 4-2. Sobel Tests for Mediated Relations

| Predictor                  | Mediator                  | Criterion | z-test | p-value |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------|---------|
| Hostile intent attribution | Collective responsibility | Anger     | 3.02   | .002**  |
|                            | judgment                  |           |        |         |
| Hostile intent attribution | assailants                | Anger     | .95    | .33     |

*Note.* \*\*  $p < .01$

#### 4.4 Discussion

The aim of this chapter was to extend research on how hostile intent attribution predicts the emotion of anger, and based on the result of Chapter 3, confirm the physiological effect of hostile intent attribution on anger. These questions were examined in the context of Chinese crime that occurred in Japan, and I used responsibility judgment theory to demonstrate the psychological process of hostile intent attribution and anger. I found that higher hostile intent attribution was associated with higher anger. In addition, the present study yielded evidence that collective responsibility judgment mediated the positive relationship between hostile intent attribution and anger, and I could not see the mediated effects of any other types of responsibility judgment. Hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 were supported.

#### *4.4.1 Theoretical implications*

The hostile intent attribution approach has provided a framework that has been used to demonstrate interpersonal or inter-group conflicts. Previously it has been observed that hostile cognitive-perceptual processes led to negative responses (e.g. Hudley & Graham, 1993; Yeager et al., 2013; Huang et al., 2015). This facilitated the assumption that hostile intent attribution would arouse inter-group anger. Chapter 3's evidence suggests that the association between hostile intent attribution and inter-group anger could be seen as cognitive emotions, the present chapter confirmed the relationship between hostile intent attribution and physiological anger through an event evaluation. As such, there are two inter-group layers to examine. The present study provided the evidence that not only cognitive, but also physiological anger toward a relative out-group is higher for high hostile intent perceivers. My findings extend the emotional barrier of research by examining the effects of the belief of hostile intent attribution.

One of the key findings of the present chapter is that collective responsibility judgment was an important mediator of the relationship between hostile intent attribution and anger. This finding is similar to research from the essentiality theory, which asserts that if perceivers believe the group members all possess similar traits, the perceivers might also consider the whole of the out-group responsible for the out-group members' personal bad acts (Denson et al., 2006). In addition, my findings are also in line with Rudolph et al. (2004) that stated that responsibility judgment plays an important role in the emotion of anger, which is always a barrier to

positive inter-group relations. Although previous studies have demonstrated the association between beliefs, responsibility judgment, and emotion, it is worth noting that, to my knowledge, no study has yet combined these three variables into one model. The suggested model deepens my understanding of the psychological processes that underlie the effect of hostile intent attribution and anger. I found that high perception of hostile intent attribution could promote collective responsibility judgment and that in turn collective responsibility judgment could arouse anger.

Interestingly, collective responsibility judgment as a mediator was related to hostile intent attribution and anger, but the other types of responsibility judgment's mediated effects were not seen. This seems to suggest a further insight into the mechanisms of responsibility judgment by reducing intergroup hostile bias. The present chapter indicates that collective blame is heightened for those with a belief that the out-group has hostility toward the in-group, whereas this is not the case for the other types of responsibility judgment, except for assailants. This result was similar to the result of Licata et al. (2011), when group members allocate responsibility to a third party, which promoted a positive intergroup attitude. Thus, from this finding, one could reasonably conclude that collective responsibility judgment raises the risk of inter-group conflict. Furthermore, the present results also showed that allocating the responsibility to assailants could also predict anger. One possibility is that when participants considered the out-group to be responsible for the transgressions, they also judged assailants as needing to take responsibility for the transgressions.

#### *4.4.2 Limitations and future research*

There are two limitations to this study. First, the source of collective responsibility judgment may be past interactive inter-group conflicts or the accumulated Chinese torts. Depending on the tort, it was difficult to conclude that it would lead to collective responsibility judgment. Future studies should employ experimental designs to examine whether a tort could cause collective responsibility judgment, or test how many times contact the news of torts would lead to collective responsibility judgment.

Second, there are several methodological issues. First, my sample was limited to university students, and the participants were primarily women, potentially limiting the generalizability of our results. In the future, I need to take samples from across social classes or across social culture. Finally, contact quantity was measured by only one item. Future research should strengthen contact quantity measures through a greater number of items.

In conclusion, the present chapter contributes to inter-group conflict literature. The current investigation indicates that the relation between hostile intent attribution and inter-group anger is mediated by responsibility judgment. The present findings do not exclude the possibility that the relation between collective responsibility judgment and hostile intent attribution is cyclic or reciprocal instead of simply linear. Furthermore, Chapter 2, 3, and 4 have provided evidence suggesting that hostile intent attribution as a motivational factor plays an important role in inter-group

relations, and thus how to reduce hostile intent attribution is important for inter-group conflict reduction. Thus, I will focus on the reduction of hostile intent attribution in Chapter 5.

## Chapter 5

### *Study IV*

The effects of intergroup contact on  
hostile intent attribution

## **Abstract of Chapter 5**

This chapter examines the relation of hostile intent attribution and inter-group contact. I propose a model of inter-group contact wherein contact reduces hostile intent attribution, which in turn is associated with support for aggressive policies. Furthermore, I advance the hypothesis of perspective taking's moderating effect, whereby contact quantity interacts with perspective taking to reduce the hostile intent attribution. Results revealed that contact quality predicted decreased support for aggressive policies, via reduced hostile intent attribution. In addition, participants who had more frequent contact with the out-group and had a higher level of perspective taking were associated with lower hostile intent attribution and lower support for aggressive policies. Hostile intent attribution partly mediated the relationship between contact quantity and support for aggressive policies through perspective taking. In contrast, contact quantity was positively related to support for aggressive policies through hostile intent attribution when perspective taking was low.

## 5.1 Introduction of study IV

### 5.1.1 *Hostile intent attribution as mediator*

A demonstrated function of hostile intent attribution is to motivate aggression (Tremblay & Belchevski, 2004), resulting in aggression-inducing cognition (Spector & Fox, 2010). Furthermore, Huang et al. (2015) have found that hostile intent attribution would be likely to operate in public decision-making, thereby increasing public support for aggressive policies towards out-groups. Thus, I expect hostile intent attribution will predict support for aggressive policies directly. As such, inter-group contact may, therefore, promote inter-group relations by reducing hostile intent attribution.

### 5.1.2 *Inter-group contact as antecedent*

Many studies have shown that inter-group contact is one of most effective strategies for improving inter-group relations (e.g.: Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003; Tam, Hewstone, Cairns, Tausch, Maio, & Kenworthy, 2007). It is clear from the literature that intergroup contact is effective in reducing inter-group bias (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000) and improving inter-group attitude (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In agreement with these results and with debates, I expected inter-group contact to be associated with lower support for aggressive policies.

A large body of research has shown that inter-group contact effects negative attitude by reducing negative beliefs related to the out-group. For instance, González, Verkuyten, Weesie, and Poppe (2008) have shown the

effect of inter-group contact on negative attitude toward Muslims through reducing violent stereotypes in the Dutch. Curseu, Stoop, and Schalk (2006) also revealed the effect of inter-group contact in reducing the perception of threat. Due to inter-group contact, group members often change their image of the out-group and provide low negative trait attribution to explain out-group's behavior or intentions. Indeed, frequent positive contact is an effective way to promote knowledge about each other and in turn promotes understanding in the context of inter-group relations (Curseu et al., 2007; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). More understanding provides more confidence, trust, and security among inter-group members, and may lead to a lower hostile view of out-groups. As such, I expect inter-group contact will decrease hostile intent attribution. Thus, I would like to stress that inter-group contact is related to a less negative attitude of support for aggressive policies toward the out-group, via its association with reduced hostile intent attribution.

In addition, the "contact hypothesis" (Allport, 1954) suggests that opposing groups' attitudes can be improved by bringing them together under optimal conditions (equal status, authority sanction, overlapping goals, and cooperation). Allport (1954) also proposed constituent factors of the 'nature of contact,' including contact quantity (e.g., contact frequency) and contact quality (the social atmosphere surrounding contact). In the present study, I examine contact in terms of quantity and quality in order to demonstrate the impact of contact on attitudes. Higher frequency of contact and better contact quality have been found to positively affect inter-group attitude

(Aberson & Haag, 2007). Though numerous studies have provided evidence of the role of inter-group contact in improving inter-group relations, even when contact conditions are not optimal, contact quality still has a positive effect on inter-group relations. However, according to the results of previous research, the effects of contact quantity on attitude are smaller when contact conditions are not ideal (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Aberson & Haag, 2007). Thus, I further examine the multiplicative combination of contact quantity and perspective taking.

### *5.1.3 Perspective taking as moderator*

The effects of intergroup contact on inter-group relations were always driven by changed stereotypes and enhanced perspective taking (Aberson & Haag, 2007). Perspective taking refers to the ability to understand the perspective of others (Davis, 1994). In this chapter, I focus perspective taking on cognitive empathy. Numerous studies have documented that inter-group contact was an important predictor for perspective taking (e.g.: Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Swart, Hewstone, Christ, & Voci, 2011). Inter-group contact can facilitate perspective taking, and perspective taking can, in turn, improve inter-group attitude. In fact, perspective taking has been found to act as a mediator between inter-group contact and attitude toward out-group in many prior studies (e.g.: Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy, Cairns, Marinetti, Geddes, & Parkinson, 2008; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008 ).

Seeing the world from other viewpoints can increase tolerance,

helping (Baston, 2009), in-group favoritism (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000), and positive inter-group attitudes (Dovidio, ten Vergert, Stewart, Gaertner, Johnson, Esses, Reik, & Pearson, 2004; Vescio, Sechrist, & Paolucci, 2003). A series of studies showed that participants who consider others' psychological perspectives demonstrated reduced racial bias (Todd, Bodenhausen, Richeson, & Galinsky, 2011), inter-group discrimination (Todd, Bodenhausen, & Galinsky, 2012), inter-group anxiety (Aberson & Haag, 2007), and reduced inter-group social distance (Vezzali & Giovannini, 2012), extending to inter-group evaluations (Galinsky, & Moskowitz, 2000). The reason may be that when group members who believed they understood out-group members' points of view, it demonstrated an overlap between the self and other (Galinsky, & Moskowitz, 2000). This made people feel the others were similar to themselves, and they liked people who were similar to them more (Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce, 1996). The group members with high perspective taking should report more positive perception and less negative subjective beliefs. If perspective taking encourages more positive attitudes, promotes positive evaluations and interaction, and increases the amount of self-other overlap, in turn, it may not be possible to attribute the related out-groups' intentions toward the in-group as hostility. Given that perspective taking was the strategy which could lead to better understanding of out-group member's point of view, I hypothesized that perspective taking would reduce the negative beliefs that related out-group members have the intention to harm the in-group.

Rather than directly affecting hostile intent attribution, perspective

taking may moderate the effects of contact quantity. More contact experience predicted higher perspective taking (Aberson & Haag, 2007, Vezzali & Giovannini, 2012). The same went for having a higher frequency of contact, the members with higher perspective taking were less inclined to attribute the out-groups' intention to hostility. As I have noted, more inter-group contact is likely to increase perspective taking, thereby showing less negative beliefs like stereotype and bias. Approach-type perceptions and hostile intent attribution are consistent with these general trends. I, therefore, expect the multiplicative combination of contact quantity and perspective taking will be able to predict hostile intent attribution when the main effect of contact quantity would not be able to.

In this study, the interaction between contact quantity and perspective taking decreases the inter-group negative perception. I expect that the interaction is such that a combination of more frequent inter-group contact and more understanding of out-group perspectives will exert a negative impact on hostile intent attribution. Based on the statements above, I propose the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1: Inter-group contact will change the attitude of support for aggressive policies by reducing hostile intent attribution.*

*Hypothesis 2: Hostile intent attribution fully mediates the relation between interaction of contact quantity and perspective taking and support for aggressive policies. The contact quantity through perspective taking is expected to demonstrate that more contact quantity combined with perspective taking produces the lowest level of hostile intent attribution.*

## 5.2 Method

### 5.2.1 Participants

In July 2015, 244 Japanese University students participated in the survey-based study, which took place at universities in Japan. Based on self-report, the sample consisted of 74 males and 165 females. Five students did not report gender. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 37 years. The mean age of the whole sample was 19.51 ( $SD = 4.24$ ).

Prior to the data collection, The first page of the survey was shown to participants, asking for their informed consent, and stating that they were free to drop out at any time while filling out the questionnaire.

### 5.2.2 Measures

The questionnaire used for the survey included demographic questions as well as measures of inter-group contact, causal attribution, hostile intent attribution, and support for aggressive policies.

*Inter-group contact* was measured with four items, which included two dimensions (one for quantity and three for quality). One item was used to evaluate the quantity of direct social contact where the participants were asked to indicate on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (totally don't see) to 7 (often see). The three items used to evaluate the quality of social contact were asked to describe the general character of their contact with Chinese people. Participants were asked to rate their agreement on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Items in the scale included: "Pleasing," "Cooperative," and "Unpleasant (reversed)." Cronbach's alpha

was .76.

*Hostile intent attribution* was assessed with two items that focused on the perception that an out-group intended to harm the in-group. The items adapted from Huang et al, (2015). The items described the strength of the perceived intention to harm within the Chinese and Japanese samples. Examples included: “Chinese always embarrass Japanese on purpose’ and ‘The behaviours of the Chinese reflect malicious intentions towards Japan”. The cronbach’s alphas were .87.

*Perspective taking* was measured with a three-item scale. Items in the scale included: “I can image how things look from a Chinese perspective,” “I try to understand Chinese people from their perspective,” and “Even though the Chinese mind is different from the Japanese, I think it is because they have their own viewpoint and situation.” Participants were asked to rate their agreement on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Cronbach’s alpha was .61.

*Support for aggressive policies* was measured with four items derived from research on Japan–China relations (Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012). The items described the strength of perceived victimhood within the Chinese and Japanese samples. An example was: “If Japan has aggressive intentions toward China, we should consider pre-emptive action”. Values for Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  were .74.

After completing the questionnaire, participants were asked to fill out their age, sex, and nationality. They could subsequently share their opinions freely with us.

## 5.3 Results

### 5.3.1 Factor analysis

A factor analysis was performed, using Promax rotation, on all out-group contact items. Different to our assumption of one factor, the results have two clearly distinct factors (quantity and contact quality) with eigenvalue > 1. One item of quantity was loaded onto the first factor; three items of contact quality (pleasure, cooperative, unpleasant) were loaded onto the second factor.

The correlations between the variables entered in the path analysis were almost in the expected direction. The results of the intercorrelations are shown in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1. Means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations between measured variables

|  | M     | SD    | 1 | 2     | 3      | 4     | 5      | 6      |
|--|-------|-------|---|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| 1. Contact quantity                        | 2.94  | 1.92  | — | .23** | .04    | .23** | -.05   | .14*   |
| 2. Contact quality                         | 2.28  | 1.46  |   | —     | -.34** | .27** | -.21** | .18*   |
| 3. Hostile intent attribution              | 3.13  | 1.09  |   |       | —      | -.14* | .34**  | -.15*  |
| 4. Perspective taking                      | 2.86  | 0.83  |   |       |        | —     | -.02   | .07    |
| 5. Support for aggressive policies         | 2.25  | 0.92  |   |       |        |       | —      | -.21** |
| 6. Contact quantity<br>×Perspective taking | n / a | n / a |   |       |        |       |        | —      |

*Note.* \*\* $p < .01$ ; \* $p < .05$

A path analysis was conducted using the Amos program in the SPSS 17.0 package to test the mediating role of hostile intent attribution between intergroup contact and support for aggressive policies. The path coefficient of the model was shown in figure 4-1 which shows that there was a good data fit ( $\chi^2(2) = 1.12, p = .57, GFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, SRMR = .011, AIC = 51.45$ ). I can explain the relationship between the variables based on the proposed model. Figure 4-1 shows that quantity was significantly correlated with contact quality ( $r = .24, p < .01$ ), perspective taking ( $r = .23, p < .001$ ) and contact quantity  $\times$  perspective taking ( $r = .14, p < .05$ ). Contact quality was significantly correlated with perspective taking ( $r = .28, p < .001$ ). The results also suggested that contact quantity and contact quality and contact quantity  $\times$  perspective taking had a direct effect on hostile intent attribution ( $\beta = .36, p < .001; \beta = -.14, p < .05$ , respectively). Conversely, contact quantity was negatively associated with hostile intent attribution ( $\beta = .16, p < .05$ ). Hostile intent attribution was positively associated with support for aggressive policies ( $\beta = .28, p < .001$ ) and contact quantity  $\times$  perspective was negatively associated with support for aggressive policies ( $\beta = -.17, p < .01$ )

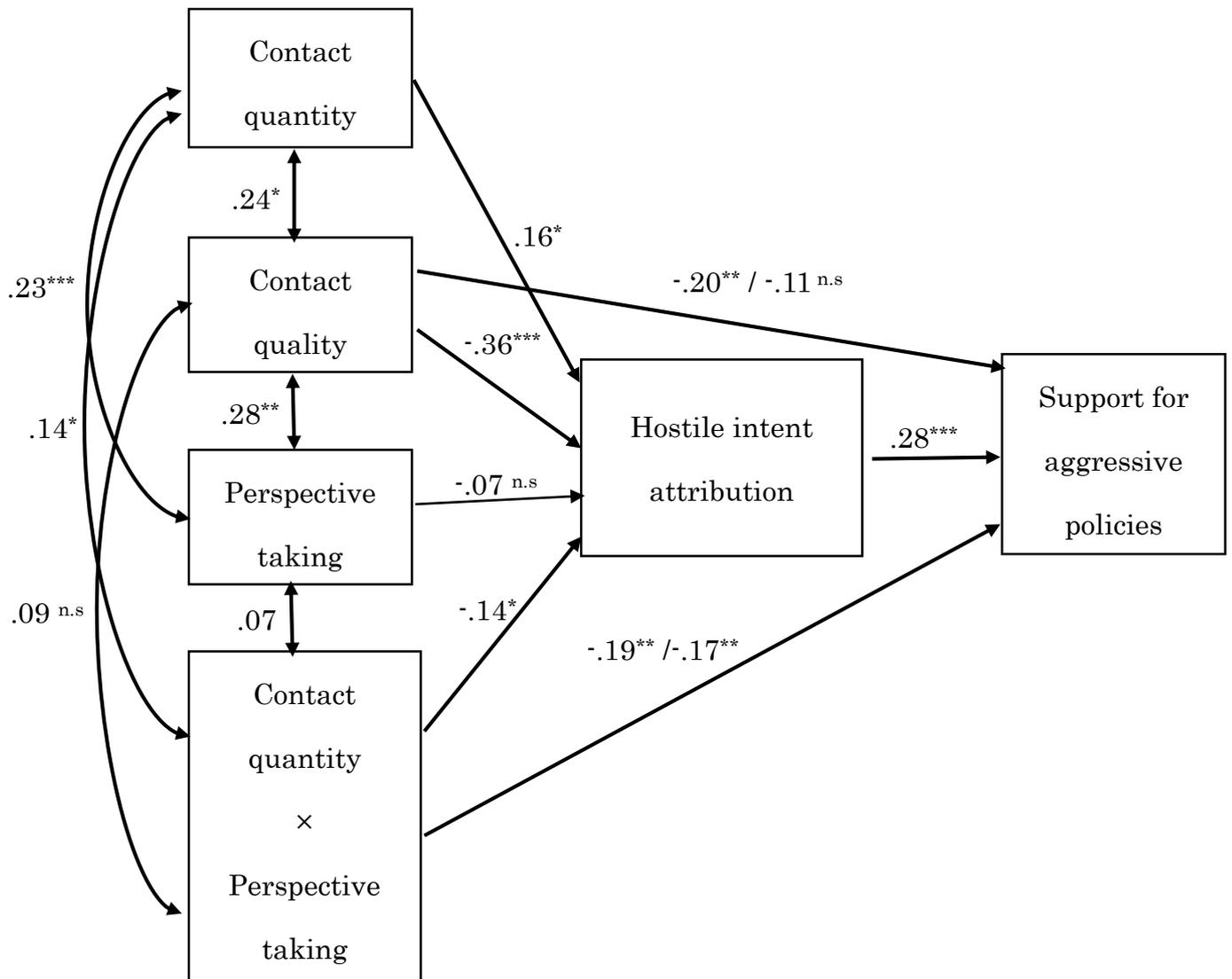


Figure 5-1. Standardized path coefficients for intergroup contact predicting hostile intent attribution.

*Note.* \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$

Although I proposed the model fit the data well, I propose three alternative models to confirm its suitability. The fit measures of these three models are presented in Table 5-2. In the first alternative model, I omitted the direct paths between contact quantity  $\times$  perspective taking and support

for aggressive policies. This was done in order to examine whether hostile intent attribution was fully mediated by the relationship between contact quantity  $\times$  perspective taking and support for aggressive policies. In the second model, hostile intent attribution was converted into an independent variable, and all variables were predictors except for support for aggressive policies. In the third model, a direct path was specified in order to confirm whether hostile intent attribution was partly mediated by the relationship between contact quality and support for aggressive policies.

Table 5-2. Results of alternative models

|                     | <i>N</i> | <i>X</i> <sup>2</sup> | <i>df</i> | <i>GFI</i> | <i>RMSEA</i> | <i>SRMR</i> | <i>AIC</i> |
|---------------------|----------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Alternative model 1 | 244      | 107.55                | 15        | .94        | .07          | .04         | 56.64      |
| Alternative model 2 | 244      | 107.55                | 15        | 1          | .00          | .00         | 54         |
| Alternative model 3 | 244      | 107.55                | 15        | 1          | .00          | .01         | 51.12      |

Additionally, I also conducted Sobel tests (Baron & Kenny, 1986) to verify whether hostile intent attribution was a significant mediator. Table 5-3 shows the mediation effect of hostile intent attribution in the relation between contact quality and support for aggressive policies ( $z = -3.32$ ,  $p < .001$ ) as well as the relation between contact quantity  $\times$  perspective taking and support for aggressive policies ( $z = -2.02$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

A final set of analyses were conducted to test the moderating role of perspective taking. The results showed, as predicted, when contact quantity

was high, hostile intent attribution decreased as perspective taking increased ( $\beta = -.40$ ;  $t = -3.64$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In addition, the results also revealed that when contact quantity was high, support for aggressive policies decreased with increase in perspective taking ( $\beta = -.22$ ;  $t = -2.40$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, when contact quantity was low, there was not a significant relationship between perspective taking and hostile intent attribution, or between perspective taking and support for aggressive policies. Higher contact quantity was more likely to decrease intergroup hostility than lower contact quantity following perspective taking.

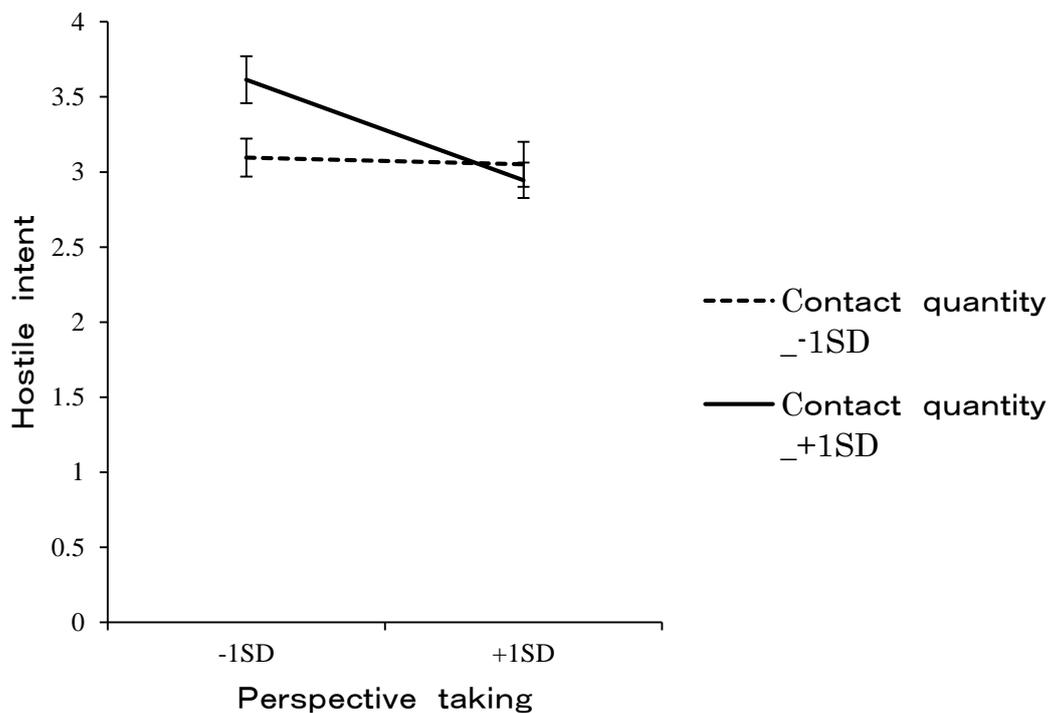


Figure 5-2. Moderating effect of perspective taking on the relationship between contact quantity and hostile intent attribution

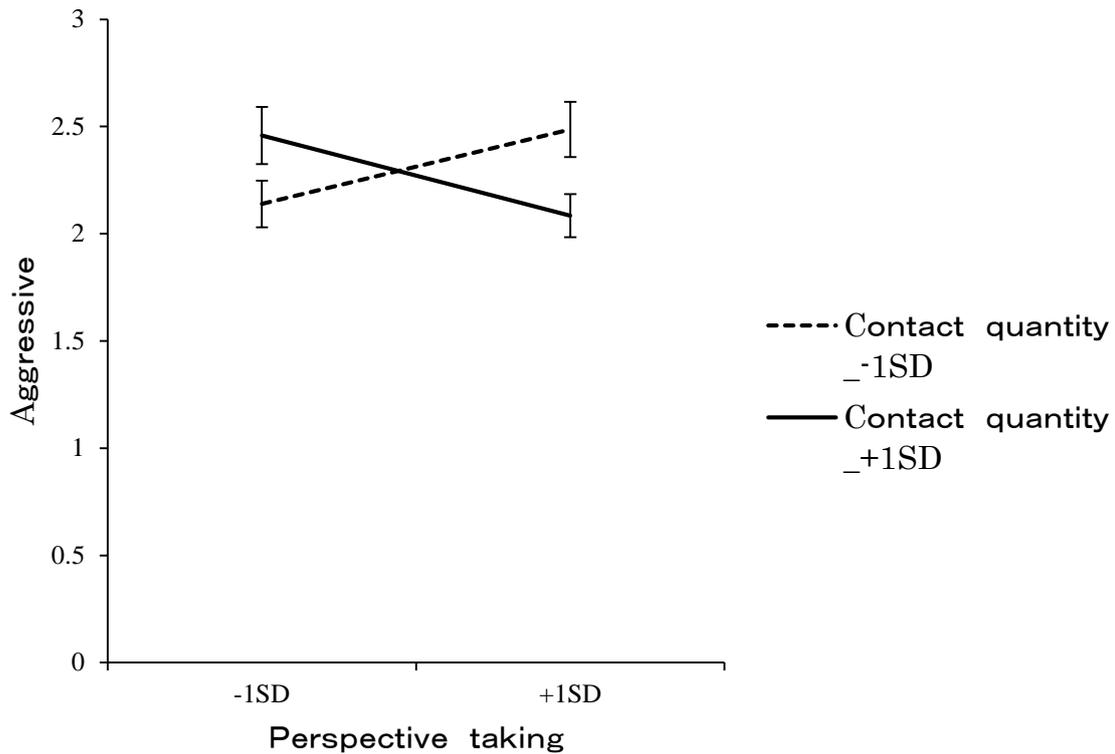


Figure 5-3. Moderating effect of perspective taking on the relationship between contact quantity and support for aggressive policies

#### 5.4 Discussion

I examined hostile intent attribution as the mediator of the relationship between inter-group contact and support for aggressive policies. Consistent with my expectations, contact quality predicted support for aggressive policies that was mediated by hostile intent attribution. Contrary to my hypothesis, contact quantity was positively related to support for aggressive policies through hostile intent attribution. In addition, contact quality by perspective taking was associated with support for aggressive policies that was partly mediated by hostile intent attribution. Contact quality by perspective taking also directly predicted support for aggressive

policies. According to the results, hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 were partly supported.

#### *5.4.1 Findings*

First, a considerable amount of theory and research suggests that quality inter-group contact plays a key role in improving inter-group relations. The current study also demonstrated the positive inter-group contact to reduce hostile intent attribution, and thereby reduce the aggressive attitude toward the related out-group. My results revealed that, at least in the context of the Japanese sample and the measures studied here, the effects of inter-group contact were more positive when they were associated with less hostile perception and less support for aggressive policies.

Second, interestingly, the findings of this study are somewhat inconsistent with my hypotheses and previous empirical work. A large body of empirical work has provided evidence that contact quantity has an effect on reducing inter-group bias (e.g. Curseu et al., 2007; González et al., 2008), yet the current study finds at least some evidence to the contrary. More specifically, contact quantity was positively related to support for aggressive policies through an association with increasing hostile intent attribution. One possible explanation is that frequency of contact may not necessarily ameliorate inter-group relations when it lacks some necessary conditions of contact (equal status, authority sanction, overlapping goals, and cooperation), and in turn might easily lead to inter-group anxiety (Shelton, 2003). The

course of contact when group members feel uncomfortable and have difficulty with perspective taking, to the contrary, may easily lead to hostile intent attribution (Paolini, Harwood, & Rubin, 2010; or see Chapter 3) under less than ideal conditions. Thus it is not surprising that increased contact quantity seemed to strengthen hostile intent attribution. Though this result may be specific to my sample, it does suggest that if the contact experiences are negative, the frequency of contact may not have a beneficial impact on inter-group relations.

However, the results also reported that perspective taking moderated the effect of contact quantity on hostile intent attribution. With increased contact quantity, people with higher perspective taking will be less inclined to perceive related out-groups as intending to harm the in-group. The current findings demonstrate that perspective taking effectively moderated the relationship between contact quantity and hostile intent attribution. Notably, perspective taking acted as a moderator that completely changed the relationship between contact quantity and hostile intent attribution. This finding helps to explain how contact quantity impacts hostile intent attribution, suggesting that perspective taking is central to making contact quantity effective in reducing negative beliefs.

Third, perhaps most notably, the interaction of contact quantity and perspective taking seemed to outperform the others in reducing support for aggressive policies. One interpretation concluded from my results is that a higher frequency of contact and a higher level of perspective taking with the Chinese serve to reduce aggressive attitudes toward the Chinese. A body of

empirical research has shown that contact quantity reduces negative attitude through the association with perspective taking (e.g. Aberson, & Haag, 2007; Vezzali, & Giovannini, 2012). In the current study, perspective taking was an important moderator that interacted with contact quantity and suggested that more contact quantity leads to a higher level of perspective taking, as well as less negative attitude toward out-groups. This finding clarifies the mechanism by which perspective taking reduces aggressive attitudes toward the out-group.

Finally, consistent with my expectancy, hostile intent attribution predicted promoted support for aggressive policies. This result is consistent with studies suggesting that hostile intent attribution promotes aggressive behavior and attitude easily (Huang et al., 2015; Hudley, & Graham, 1993; Yeager et al., 2013). Hostile intent attribution mediated the impact of contact quality, and contact quantity by perspective taking on support for aggressive policies.

#### *5.4.2 Theoretical implications*

Inter-group contact as a construct is drawing a lot of attention in the academic world (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). The contact quality approach has provided a framework that has been used as a basis for the development of inter-group relations. The strategy of contact quantity definitely provides the inter-group relationship solution. This finding extends the inter-group contact research by examining the context of China-Japan relations.

Although a considerable amount of evidence has shown that contact

quantity as an effective strategy can promote negative perception-reduction, the present finding was contrary to previous studies. The low level of perspective taking for the in-group category becomes salient (Paolini et al., 2010) in the course of inter-group contact that could easily lead to negatively perceived out-groups. This finding provides evidence to support this theory.

The role of perspective taking here is especially important. Using this formulation, individuals who have a large amount of contact quantity and a high level of perspective taking also have low aggressive perception and attitude toward China. Hostile intent attribution as a motivating agent determines the inter-group conflicts. If the perception of hostile intent attribution is high, the attitude toward the out-group is negative. However, when individuals experience more contact and experience higher perspective taking, their attitude is less aggressive.

#### *5.4.3 Limitations*

Some limitations in the studies I have presented. It is difficult to provide definitive conclusions regarding causation between the variables. I cannot confirm whether the inter-group contact predicted hostile intent attribution or whether aggressive attitude predicted inter-group contact through hostile intent attribution. Future studies should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to determine the definitive direction of these paths.

Second, although I provided a model with moderated relations, there is the potential for an additional moderator. For instance, one could take

perspective as a moderator in the relation between contact quantity and hostile intent attribution and attitude in supporting aggressive policies. However, taking perspective as a moderator also includes an emotion dimension (Davis, 1983), and emotions have been shown to be associated with inter-group prejudice (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2004). Future models should address perspective taking of the emotion dimension as a moderator that moderates the association between inter-group contact and hostile intent attribution.

Finally, in the present study, I have provided explanations why contact quantity was positively associated with hostile intent attribution. Despite these reasons for confidence, as a general point, I would advise future studies to test the interaction between the salience category and contact quantity and whether this enhances hostile perception.

#### *5.4.4 Conclusions*

The contact with out-group in a popular culture model provides a theoretical framework for understanding out-group attitude. This study has shown that extended contact can have a positive effect on out-group attitude, and it also can remove inter-group negative stereotypes.

## Chapter 6

### *General discussion*

### Views of hostile intent attribution

### **Abstract of Chapter 6**

In this chapter, hostile intent attribution is discussed in accordance with the results of earlier examinations. First, the results of Chapter 2 to Chapter 5 are organized. Second, the implications of these results for restoring fractured inter-group relations are discussed. Finally, I discuss potential antecedents and moderators of hostile intent attribution for future research.

In previous chapters I have demonstrated the psychological process of hostile intent attribution, and tested the hypotheses through surveys. In Chapter 6, I will organize the results and discuss them based on my statistical analyses. Then, I will examine the study's implications and propose a future research agenda.

### **6.1 The goals of present study**

The present study addressed five major goals. First, I hypothesized that basic human values predict hostile intent attribution through perceived threats; the result of this relationship was revealed in Chapter 2. My second goal was to use hostile intent attribution as a mediator demonstrating the relationship between nationalism and inter-group emotion. The result was shown in Chapter 3. Third, I aimed to test the relationship between hostile intent attribution and anger through responsibility judgment; see Chapter 4. My fourth goal was to test the effectiveness of hostile intent attribution on inter-group bias: support for aggressive policies; see Chapter 2 and Chapter 5. Finally, I aimed to find strategies for reducing hostile intent attribution. For this purpose, in Chapter 5 I established a model in which hostile intent attribution was associated with inter-group contact. To strengthen the effectiveness of contact on inter-group relationships, in Chapter 5, I used perspective taking as a moderator to demonstrate the relationship between quantity of contact and hostile intent attribution. In sum, the main goal of the present study was to demonstrate the psychological mechanism of hostile intent attribution and analyze its antecedents, functions, moderators, and

consequences at the group level.

## **6.2 The results of the present study**

My primary aim in the present study was to provide evidence to show the effects of hostile intent attribution on inter-group relationships. In this regard, this study provided robust evidence to fill the gap concerning the relationship between hostile intent attribution and inter-group conflict. The results of the present study showed clear support for the theoretical innovation that produced my hypotheses.

First, in Chapter 2, two types of human values, traditionalism and universalism, were hypothesized to predict hostile intent attribution through symbolic threats and realistic threats. I conducted a survey testing the hypotheses in China and Japan. Results showed that traditionalism and universalism predicted hostile intent attribution via symbolic threats in Chinese and Japanese samples. These results indicated the important role of human values for hostile intent attribution, and that symbolic threats play important roles in the relationship between values and hostile intent attribution.

Second, in Chapter 3, I hypothesized hostile intent attribution as a mediator of the relationship between nationalism and inter-group emotion (anger and fear). In both Chinese and Japanese samples, the effect of nationalism on anger was mediated by hostile intent attribution. Additionally, I did not find that hostile intent attribution mediated the relationship between nationalism and fear in both samples. In sum, these

results demonstrated the effects of nationalism on inter-group emotion via hostile intent attribution.

Third, in Chapter 4, I hypothesized that the association between hostile intent attribution and anger was mediated by responsibility judgment. A survey was conducted in Japan. The results showed that the effect of hostile intent attribution on anger was partly mediated by collective responsibility judgment. This finding indicated that hostile intent attribution readily aroused inter-group anger when group members considered that the whole out-group to be responsible for the inter-group negative event.

Fourth, in Chapters 2 through 5, I hypothesized that hostile intent attribution would predict negative responses towards a relative out-group, in line with my hypotheses that hostile intent attribution contributed to explaining negative inter-group relations. These results demonstrated that hostile intent attribution plays a significant role in inter-group relations.

Finally, considering that inter-group contact has benefits for inter-group relationships, I especially introduced inter-group contact in Chapter 5. In this chapter, I hypothesized that inter-group contact would improve inter-group relationships by reducing hostile intent attribution. In line with my hypotheses, contact quality improved inter-group attitude by reducing hostile intent attribution. Contrary to my hypothesis, quantity of contact was positively related to support for aggressive policies through hostile intent attribution. In addition, contact quality, indicated by perspective taking, was associated with support for aggressive policies, that was partly

mediated by hostile intent attribution. Contact quality indicated by perspective taking also directly predicted support for aggressive policies. In this chapter, my hypothesis was based on the results of Chapter 5 showing that positive inter-group contact could reduce hostile intent attribution.

### **6.3 Theoretical implications**

This study has some important theoretical implications. First, I demonstrated that basic human values can predict hostile intent attribution through perceived threats. Traditionalism and universalism appeared to have indirectly significant effects on hostile intent attributions. This makes sense, because the in-group's tradition is more important for group members, and they may be more sensitive to anything that would harm their group. This is similar to identification, which has been shown to be associated with negative attitudes toward out-groups (see Riek et al., 2006). Thus, the greater the traditionalism, the more threats that are likely to be perceived, then the stronger hostility becomes, resulting in more aggressive responses. Traditionalism gives rise to feelings of threat and attributions of hostile bias through threats. On the other hand, universalism was shown to have an indirect relationship with hostile intent attribution. It is possible that the characteristics of universalism that seem to be acceptable, such as tolerance toward out-groups, mean that motives based on universalism are more likely to mitigate threat effects. Such hostile intent attribution may be reduced by reducing the negative consequence of threats. My study was the first to provide evidence documenting relationships between human values and

aggressive attitudes by using hostile intent attribution and perceived threats.

Second, in Chapter 3, the model confirmed my hypotheses regarding nationalism and consequences of group-based anger and fear regarding hostile intent attribution. This study indicated that anger was experienced in Chinese and Japanese samples when they perceived that an out-group was hostile toward them. Gordijn, Wigboldus, and Yzerbyt (2001) demonstrated that an out-group intentionally behaving to harm others predicted anger. Thus, in situations when in-group members perceived an out-group as intending to harm them, they experienced anger. On the other hand, in-group members would experience fear toward an out-group depending on whether they perceived the out-group as intending to behave offensively. My results thus confirm the important role of hostile intent attribution for inter-group emotions. The present study provides a better understanding of how exactly inter-group emotions were evoked, through demonstrating hostile intent attribution. Furthermore, the study showed why hostile intent attribution could predict two different emotions. The possible reason is that when in-group members consider an out-group's status or power as lower or weaker than the in-group, anger is easily aroused in response to negative perceptions. In contrast, when an out-group is considered higher or stronger than the in-group, fear is aroused (Mackie, Decos, & Smith, 2000).

In Chapter 3, I also found nationalism as an antecedent successfully predicted hostile intent attribution, and affected inter-group emotions via

hostile intent attribution. Nationalism is a kind of national identity that is sensitive to inter-group relationships. Perception of historical inter-group conflicts may be more likely to lead to out-group hatred, and considering out-groups to have hostility toward the in-group. Smith (1993) argued that when individuals consider the self as a part of the group, they would experience specific emotions. Previous studies have documented specific identity-emotion relations, but few have provided evidence for the mediating process that produces identity-emotion relations. Thus, in the present study, I investigated hostile intent attribution as a mediator between nationalism and inter-group anger. Nationalism predicts anger when an out-group has hostile intentions toward the in-group. Hostile intent attribution plays an important mediating role in explaining the identity-emotion relationships.

Notably, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 demonstrated the process through which traditionalism and perceived threats combine, and that nationalism successfully and directly predicted hostile intent attribution. In my view, open- versus close-mindedness is the key mechanism for establishing hostile beliefs. Close-mindedness is represented by traditionalism and nationalism that tend to adhere to dominant social norms characterized by exclusivity and unwillingness to look for approaches to resolution of conflict (see Halperin & Bar-tal, 2011). Close-minded members were unwilling to consider new ideas and searched for information to support their already-held knowledge (Kruflanski & Webster, 1996), such as information consistent with the belief that out-groups intend to harm the in-group. Contrary to those with close minds, people who hold universalistic values

care for and protect the welfare of all people (including rivals). These members showed willingness to facilitate each other's knowledge and positively look for approaches that can facilitate the resolution of conflicts. This viewpoint was also supported by empirical literature (see Gayer, Landman, Halperin, & Bar-Tal, 2009; Halperin & Bar-Tal, 2011). Thus, it is feasible that people who hold the value of universalism reduce their belief in hostile intent attribution through perceived threats. In sum, the present study has successfully demonstrated the human mental process that predicts hostile intent attribution. My findings not only extend the literature of hostile intent attribution but also reaffirmed the viewpoint that conflict begins in the human mind and can also end in the human mind. Furthermore, I exposed the psychological process through which the human mind and hostile intent attribution combine to explain intergroup conflicts.

Furthermore, my study reinforces the paths of differences between Chinese and Japanese individuals, and I have confirmed significant differences of the paths from the comparison of the results of the models in Chapter 2 and 3. These differences may be explained by three possibilities. First is the different social structure between China and Japan. The pattern of results may reflect the different social composition of China as a multination, and the ethnic conflicts throughout the history of China (e.g., during the northern and southern Song). The encouragement given by the government and schools in China to people to be politically engaged means that Chinese people should respect other cultures or regions. The notion of "national fusion" is mainstream in national policies, particularly with

respect to culturally unfamiliar and economically vulnerable ethnicities. Compared with Japanese individuals, who belong to a mono-ethnic state, ethnic conflicts are not unusual for Chinese. Likewise, people from a multi-ethnic society, as compared a mono-ethnic society, may be more skilled at dealing with psychological stresses of intergroup relations.

Second, the results may reflect perceived differences in status between China and Japan. A number of studies have demonstrated that status differences contribute to highly divergent intergroup perspectives and relations (e.g., Shnabel, Nadler, Canetti-Nisim, & Ullrich, 2008; Ljujic et al., 2012; Tausch, Hewstone, Kenworthy, Cairns, & Christ, 2007; Stephan & Renfro, 2003). For example, Taush et al. (2007) found that the higher the perceived relative status of the ingroup, the less threat and anxiety are reported. However, it is difficult to judge whose status is higher in the context of China and Japan. Japan is a long-standing developed country with a strong economy and culture, while on the other hand, China is a developing country whose development and increasing influence have drawn considerable attention in recent years. A new uprising power means signaling a change in the world's distribution of resources and power, which could easily elicit anxiety, as it is difficult to determine whether these changes offer benefits or potential danger. Ljujic et al. (2012) showed that higher status nationalists are more sensitive to threats and more likely to hold negative attitudes in the Netherlands. Likewise, it is reasonable to believe that even group members who perceive their status as higher might also report high levels of hostility when a new individual asks for share

resources. For example, Tausch, Hewstone, and Roy (2009) showed that higher status leads to increased intergroup anxiety. As such, I could not confirm the conclusions of prior research and whether they apply to the context of China and Japan. The role of high and low status must be examined experimentally in the future to better understand intergroup differences.

Finally, a possible reason is the effects of Japanese mass culture, which dominated Asia for decades and came to China in the 1980s, where Japanese animation, drama, movies, songs, Anime, and so on have promoted knowledge of Japan among Chinese youth. Guo and Quan (2006) demonstrated that contact with Japanese popular culture affects the behavior of Chinese individuals, including facilitating Japanese language learning and decision to study in Japan. Ishii (2001) also found that frequency of contact with Japanese popular culture is positively related with attitudes toward Japan. Given more possibilities to contact with an outgroup's popular culture, group members may become more familiar with the outgroup's culture. Thus, the different paths between Chinese and Japanese cultures may have emerged because Japanese students have little contact with Chinese mass culture and show higher scores of path coefficients than Chinese students, who frequently experience Japanese mass culture. As such, for example, Chinese nationalism less predicted hostile intent attribution in study 2. This viewpoint is in accord with Ljujic et al. (2012), who also considered that the more contact opportunities lead to reduced intergroup negative beliefs and attitudes.

Third, in Chapter 4, I attempted to explore the effect of hostile intent attribution on responsibility judgments. In this chapter I found evidence for a robust association between these two variables. More importantly, collective responsibility judgments were found to have negative effects on inter-group relationships, and my data revealed a detailed psychological process involving hostile intent attribution. In contexts where there have been no historical relationships between two groups, when a tort occurs it will be viewed in terms of personal behavior and does not motivate inter-group violence (Lickel, Miller, Stenstrom, Denson, & Schmader, 2006). If inter-group conflicts have ever happened, the interpersonal terms will readily motivate inter-group conflicts. There have been many historical conflicts between China and Japan, for example, the Second World War. In recent years, some historical issues remain unresolved, such as sovereignty over the Diaoyu Islands (known as the Senkaku Islands in Japan). Thus, when a negative act has occurred, retaliation for the actions of an individual spreads to other out-group members. This collective blame motivates inter-group conflicts (Denson, Lickel, Curtis, Stenstrom, & Ames, 2006) and inter-group anger. Collective responsibility plays a strong role in many inter-group conflicts. The effect of hostile intent attribution on responsibility judgments indicates that perception of out-group hostility easily leads to judgment of the out-group's collective responsibility, increasing the risk of group-based conflicts.

Fourth, contact quality as an effective strategy can help to overcome inter-group psychological barriers by reducing hostile intent attribution.

Contact quality is most likely to promote acknowledgment of out-groups. However, the results also showed that quantity of contact strengthens hostile intent attribution. One reason may be lack of perspective taking, resulting in frequency of contact not having a beneficial impact on reducing hostile intent attribution. Thus, I tried to use perspective taking as a moderator; the results showed that when there is increased quantity of contact, higher perspective taking reduces the inclination to perceive related out-groups as tending to harm the in-group. As mentioned before, inter-group contact has many attractive features for advancing positive inter-group relationships. First, it promotes more tolerance; second, it may work to reveal commonalities between groups (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005); third, it enhances empathy toward out-groups (Batston, Polycarpou, Harmon-Jones, Imhoff, Mitchener, & Bednar, 1997); and fourth, inter-group contact affects a range of cognitive and affective processes, for example, reducing anxiety, and increasing trust (Hodson & Hewstone, 2013). Inter-group contact may thus operate through reducing negative affective reactions toward out-groups. Logically, inter-group contact involving reduced attributions of out-group hostile intent should consolidate the path to improving inter-group contact.

Fifth, this study extends past research that demonstrated inter-group conflict through hostile intent attribution. In their original work on the topic of inter-group conflicts, the research mainly focus on perceived threats (e.g., Maoz & McCauley, 2008) and collective victimhood (e.g., Nawata & Yamaguchi, 2012), which have been linked to inter-group conflicts. However, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, the literature on perceived threats

has found few direct associations with intergroup aggressive behavior, and beliefs of collective victimhood could not explain how perpetrators escape their guilt to continue intergroup conflicts. To fill these gaps, the present study demonstrates the role that hostile intent attribution plays in intergroup conflicts. Chapter 2 and Chapter 5 indicated that when in-group members perceived that out-group's actions toward the in-group were deliberate, or perceived them to have hostile intentions to harm the in-group, these hostile perceptions in turn elicited aggressive responses to cope with the relationship with the out-group. Specially, I can see that perceived realistic threats promote support for aggressive policies through hostile intent attribution.

In sum, the current study provides some direct support for the hostile intent attribution hypothesis. When rival groups are perceived as having hostile intentions toward the in-group, in-group members are more likely to retaliate against them with aggressive responses. Hostile intent attribution refers to beliefs that evaluate the intentions of out-groups, thus, out-groups' perceived hostile intentions could deepen the sense of victimhood, reduce perpetrators' guilt for continuing inter-group conflicts, and change friendly relationships into adversarial ones. Several studies have examined the role of collective victimhood and perceived threats in different contexts. The present study provides a detailed exposition: the perception that the in-group would be deliberately harmed is what leads readily to aggressive responses against rival groups. I conclude therefore that group-level hostile intent attribution is an important concept to consider in attenuating the

detrimental effect of inter-group relations. My study extends the theoretical framework of inter-group relations from the viewpoint of hostile intent attribution.

#### **6.4 Practical implications**

Once offered, it is important to note that hostile intent attribution can be considered to exert wide-ranging effects on inter-group conflicts. Research on the affective consequences of hostile intent attribution suggests that in-group members who perceive hostile intent from an out-group will experience greater anger or fear, and this motivates aggressive attitudes toward the out-group. Hostile intent attribution can be expected to be reduced through reducing perceived threats, developing human values that positively affect inter-group relationships, and by contact quality. As Chapter 2 showed, universalism has the potential to improve intergroup relationships; therefore, it is important to strengthen universalism by expanding awareness of human welfare, or of the natural environment.

Having mentioned this, an important goal of inter-group reconciliation research is to provide an effective strategy to reduce negative perceptions. Contact quality has been shown to reduce perceived threats (see Hodson & Hewstone, 2013; González et al., 2008). Contact quality can help to reduce hostile intent attribution, prevent psychological barriers, and increase inter-group trust. Thus, it is important to provide a safe inter-group communication environment. In a secure environment and a situation of

equivalent status, hostile intent attribution can be reduced through cultural exchange, and mutual understanding should be promoted.

### **6.5 Limitations of the present study**

Several potential limitations of the present study should be acknowledged. First, in the present study, I provided four theoretical models based on correlational research designs; as such, they cannot provide definitive conclusions regarding causation between the variables. For example, perceived threats could predict hostile intent attribution, but hostile intent attribution could also lead to perceived threats; hostile intent attribution leads to collective responsibility, but it is also reasonable to assume that collective responsibility could predict hostile intent attribution based on perception of past inter-group conflicts. The lack of experimental evidence is problematic for determining the direction of causality. Thus, either controlled experimental studies or longitudinal designs to provide this evidence are needed in future studies.

Second, the present study only obtained samples from China and Japan, specifically college student samples. These groups possess many unique characteristics that differentiate them from other groups (Oakes, 1972). Thus, these results do not generalize to all Chinese and Japanese. For example, previous studies demonstrated that factors of education (Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996; Ljubic et al., 2012) and gender (Ljubic et al., 2012) were associated with out-group attitudes. Furthermore, cultural context is also an important factor for social-cognitive responding. Nisbett and Cohen (1996)

demonstrated that a culture that highlights the value of personal honor will encourage hostile attributions to personal threats. They provided evidence that people from the American South, which is characterized by this value, respond more aggressively to provocation than those from the American North. Therefore, further exploration is needed on whether my proposed model can be applied more generally to psychological processes in other cultural contexts and in the broader population.

Third, there are several methodological issues. First is the gender ratio of the samples. My studies' participants mainly consisted of women, for example, the sample in Chapter 4 was 68% female. This potentially limits the generalizability of our results. Second, measures of hostile intent attribution deserve comment. The explicit hostile measure might be difficult for participants to answer, and it should include more implicit or reversed items. Future studies should develop multi-item measures of hostile intent attribution to address these limitations. Third, the models that I proposed in the present article cannot be applied more generally to the psychological processes of other age groups because I only obtained data from college students. Accordingly, I recommend obtaining samples of participants across multiple age groups in future studies to examine the generalizability of these models. Finally, to retain the accuracy of measuring the relevant variables when comparing groups, it is critical to correct for group differences in the response scales (e.g., backtranslation). However, in studies 1 and 2, the results showed that Cronbach's alpha for the variables were not consistently above .70 for the Chinese and Japanese samples. For example, for the

traditionalism variable, Cronbach's alpha for Chinese sample was .72, but .66 for the Japanese sample. Thus, future research needs to develop an evaluation scale to improve reliability across cultures.

## **6.6 Directions for future research**

In this section, I outline a three-part proposal to guide future research about hostile intent attribution. The first part is based on the present study; future research should test other types of value or antecedents that may predict hostile intent attribution. In the second part, future research should examine the effects of group dynamics on hostile intent attribution. The third part focuses on “overcoming hostile intent attribution.”

### *6.6.1 Other antecedents for hostile intent attribution*

Although the present study has focused on how human value and in-group identity influence hostile intent attribution, there are also some alternative antecedents can predict hostile intent attribution. Brewer (1999) has demonstrated that compared with members of individualistic societies, the members of collectivist societies tend to form more distinct in-groups and out-groups, and have more distrust of out-groups. Triandis (1989) also argued that collectivism makes more distinctions between in-groups and out-groups than does individualism. Lee and Ward (1998) found that collectivism is more likely to display ethnocentric biases, and De Vries (2002) reported that collectivism relates to ethnic supremacy aspirations. Grimm,

Church, Katigbak, and Reyes (1999) proposed that collectivism has traits of traditionalism and conformity. Perhaps collectivist societies are more sensitive to anything that could harm their group; thus, out-groups that are easily viewed as high in competition, may in turn, elicit hostile intent attribution. In contrast, Leong and Ward (2006) found that greater individualism was linked to stronger support for social co-existence policies. This difference between collectivism and individualism could be explored in future integrated models of hostile intent attribution. Especially for Asians who are generally considered to belong to collectivist cultures, collectivism may play an important role in inter-group attitudes.

The present study has found that collective responsibility predicts hostile intent attribution. Entitativity refers to when groups are perceived as coherent entities (Campbell, 1958), and includes in-group entitativity and out-group entitativity. Previous research has shown that out-group entitativity is associated with collective responsibility (Denson et al., 2006). Out-group entitativity predicted collective responsibility by omission (failure to prevent a bad act) and commission (indirectly encouraging a bad act) (Denson et al., 2006). Perhaps when an out-group is viewed as an entitativity, out-group members' personal behavior or beliefs are viewed as representing the out-group. For example, perceiving group-member homogeneity may turn personal hostility into group hostility. Furthermore, in-group entitativity has also been shown to be associated with inter-group bias (Gaertner & Schopler, 1998). Group entitativity is a theoretical basis for group phenomena (i.e., prejudice, stereotypes). Thus, future research should

examine the relationship between entitativity and hostile intent attribution.

Although the relationship between hostile intent attribution and inter-group emotions has been demonstrated, it is unclear why hostile intent attribution could predict two different emotions, anger and fear. Here I proposed the reason was due to group members' perceptions of group status. When people perceive that high status out-groups have hostility towards them, this perception will in turn predict anger. In contrast, when people perceive that low status out-groups have hostility towards them, this perception will predict fear. Furthermore, when people perceive equal status out-groups have hostility toward them, it may produce inter-group anxiety. However, it still unclear that perception of a group's status really has a moderating effect on the relationship between hostile intent attribution and emotion. It would be useful to conduct an experimental study to examine the moderating effect of group status on the relationship between hostile intent attribution and emotion.

This study also suggests additional directions for research on hostile intent attribution. Although symbolic threats have been identified as predictors of hostile intent attribution in the present study, the possibility that stereotypes are also predictors has been relatively unexplored. For example, in Fiske's stereotype content model (2002) groups characterized as high in warmth, may be perceived to be less hostile toward the in-group than groups characterized as high in competence. In contrast, perhaps groups perceived as high in competence may be viewed with envy (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), and this perception in turn may evoke hostile intent

attribution. Future research is needed to explore the relationships between hostile intent attribution and stereotypes.

### *6.6.2 Group dynamics*

The small group approach and social identification approach are longstanding traditions for the social-psychological study of group processes (Margues, Abrams, & Serodio, 2001). The present study has examined the effect of national identity on hostile intent attribution; see Chapter 3. Group dynamics may also be an important factor predicting hostile intent attribution. Group dynamics refer to the influential inter-personal processes that occur in groups (Forsyth, 2009). For common goals, individuals tend to selectively affiliate with similar others (Festinger, 1950). If group members persist in their disagreement or lack of solidarity with group goals, they may elicit hostility from other members (Marques et al., 2001). Thus, to avoid being boycotted, group members may bring their beliefs into line with most group members' opinions. When beliefs that out-groups are hostile toward the in-group become group norms, group members are likely to conform to these norms regardless of whether or not the beliefs are "real." Future research is needed to explore the effects of group dynamics on hostile intent attribution.

### *6.6.3 Reducing inter-group hostile intent attribution*

The results of the present study indicate that hostile intent attribution predicts aggressive attitudes. If inter-group relationships are

expected to improve, reducing hostile intent attribution needs to be addressed. The present study suggests that universalism and contact quality can be effective in reducing hostile intent attribution. More applicable methods to reduce hostile intent attribution still need to be developed.

Although in the present study, contact quality was found to indirectly promote hostile intent attribution, quantity of contact did not reduce hostile intent attribution. Shelton (2003) has demonstrated that if direct contact lacks some necessary conditions (equal status, authority sanction, overlapping goals, and cooperation), inter-group anxiety can easily result. Thus, direct contact does not always play a critical role in reducing inter-group bias. The present study proposes other types of inter-group contact that have been shown to reduce inter-group bias in previous studies. Previous research suggests that perceived out-group variability could produce positive inter-group relations (Lambert, 1987; Pendry & Macrae, 1999). Apparently, contact with out-group popular culture is an effective strategy for reducing inter-group bias (see Kim, 2011; Watanabe, Ishii, & Kohari, 2004). Contact with popular culture can increase knowledge about out-group variability that includes deviant group members in group representations, and reduces negative memories about the inter-group. Thus, contact with out-group popular culture may reduce group-level hostile intent attribution by increasing knowledge about the out-group.

An alternative type of knowledge about the out-group involves extended contact, through being friends with group members who become close friends with out-group members; this could reduce prejudice toward the

out-group (Paolini, Hewstone, Cairns, & Voci, 2004). Hostile intent attribution can be weakened through contact with group members who develop friendships with out-group members.

Furthermore, because hostile intent attribution involves emotional mechanisms, one can increase empathy to counteract negative emotions (e.g., fear, anger). Perspective taking increase empathy for out-groups, which in turn improves inter-group relationships (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). Contact with popular culture and extended contact have been shown to predict perspective taking (Andrighetto, Mari, Volpato, & Behluli, 2012). Thus, the strategies of contact with popular culture and extended contact may counter the effects of hostile intent attribution through increasing perspective taking.

Imagined contact (Crisp & Turner, 2009) as a new indirect contact strategy for positive inter-group relations has received substantial empirical attention. For example, previous research has shown that imagined contact can improve inter-group attitude (Turner, Crisp, & Lambert, 2007), promote out-group trust (Pagotto, Visintin, De, Iorio, & Voci, 2012), and facilitate perception of out-group variability (Turner et al., 2007). Thus, perhaps the strategy of imagined contact may reduce hostile intent attribution.

The last inter-group contact approach is mutual differentiation, which encourages groups to enhance their mutual distinctiveness but in the context of cooperative interdependence (Hewstone & Brown, 1986). Brown and Wade (1987) provided evidence that assigning two groups separate roles but for the same goal, promotes positive effects on the inter-group

relationship. Cooperation can foster mutual respect for the members of each group. This approach allows separate group members to maintain their salient identities while avoiding inter-group comparisons. Thus, cooperative interdependence helps to reduce inter-group biases and mutual-distrust, perhaps overriding negative perceptions of inter-group hostility.

Another potential means of reducing hostile intent attribution is to focus on social categorization processes. As previous research proposed that social categorization emphasizes social difference and group distinctiveness, it plays a fundamental role in inter-group bias. Based on the premises of social categorization theory, three alternative categorization-based solutions for reducing bias have been developed. These approaches involve decategorization and recategorization.

The decategorization approach attempts to reduce inter-group bias by breaking down the perception of the out-group as a homogeneous unit and encouraging attention to seeing an out-group member as individual rather than as a group member (Brewer & Miller, 1984). Perceptions of out-group members as individuals can promote opportunities for interpersonal interactions, when group distinctiveness arising from social categorization is weakened (Geartner & Dovidio, 2000). Because decategorization can dissolve group boundaries, perhaps it can potentially reduce the hostile intent attribution.

Another approach is recategorization that reduces inter-group bias by reshaping group categorization. Recategorization creates a common in-group identity, and changes group members' conception of membership

from different groups to one. When the boundary between groups disappears, a common identity is created; there are cognitive and motivational processes that in-group members who share a superordinate group identity may produce in-group favoritism. Stone and Crisp (2007) showed that superordinate identification can reduce inter-group biases through perception of similarity to the out-group. Once competitive out-group members are regarded as in-group members, the perception of similarity to the out-group may be promoted, and in turn, inter-group hostility may be reduced. Thus, the recategorization approach may reduce hostile intent attribution by creating a common identity.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

How do hostile intent attributions develop, what role do they play in inter-group relationships, and what cognitive mechanisms drive them? In the current study, I have partly answered these questions, explored the concept of hostile intent attribution, and identified some of its relationships with other variables. Hostile intent attribution plays a key role in helping to understand inter-group conflicts. I hope that this study can serve as a basis for further theory-driven empirical work in inter-group conflicts, and encourage efforts in inter-group reconciliation in the future.

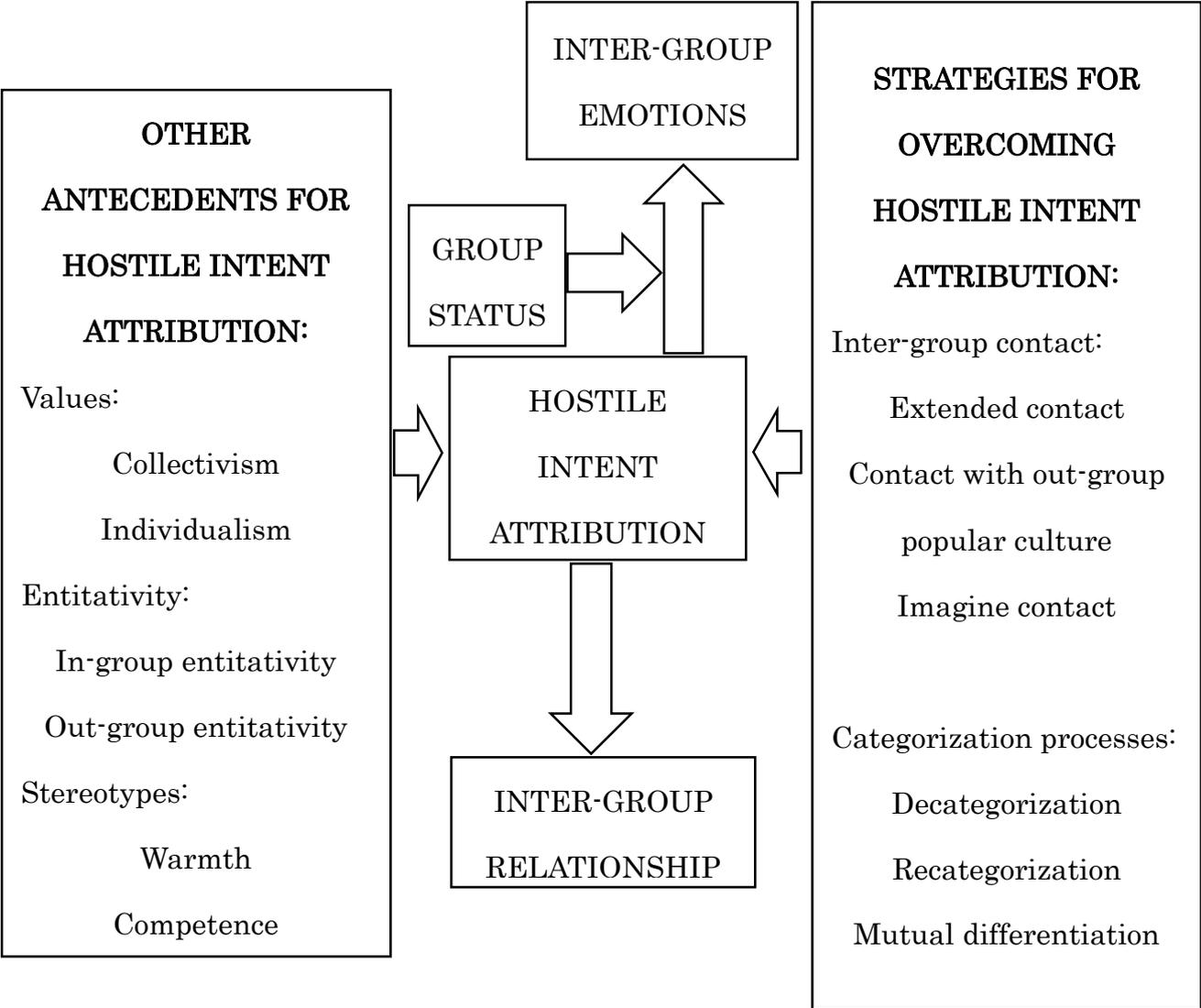


Figure 6-1 Directions of hostile intent attribution for future research

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## Appendix

| Items of the present article  |
|---|
| <b>HOSTILE INTENT ATTRIBUTION</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Japanese always embarrass Chinese on purpose.</li><li>2. The behaviours of the Japanese reflect malicious intentions towards China.</li></ol>  |
| <b>TRADITIONALISM</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I think it's important not to ask for more than you have. I believe that people should be satisfied with what they have.</li><li>2. Religious belief is important to me. I tried hard to do what my religion requires.</li><li>3. I believe it is best to do things in traditional ways. It is important to him follow the customs I have learned.</li><li>4. It is important to me to be humble and modest. I try not to draw attention to myself.</li></ol>  |
| <b>UNIVERSALISM</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I think it is important that every person in the world be treated equally. I want justice for everyone, even for people I don't know.</li><li>2. It is important to me to listen to people who are different from me. Even when I disagree with them, I still want to understand them.</li><li>3. I strongly believe that people should care for nature. Looking after the environment is important to me.</li><li>4. I believe all the worlds' people should live in harmony. Promoting peace among all groups in the world is important to me.</li></ol> |

| <b>Items of the present article</b>  |
|--|
| <p>5. I want everyone to be treated justly, even people I don't know. It is important to me to protect the weak in society.</p> <p>6. It is important to me to adapt to nature and to fit into it. I believe that people should not change nature.</p>   |
| <b>SYMBOLIC THREAT</b>   |
| <p>1. Chinese (Japanese) values are being threatened by Japan (China).</p> <p>2. Chinese and Japanese values are mutually exclusive.</p> <p>3. Chinese (Japanese) culture is now threatened by Japan (China).</p> <p>4. Chinese (Japanese) tradition is fading away because of the influence from Japanese (Chinese) Value.</p>  |
| <b>REALISTIC THREAT</b>  |
| <p>1. Chinese (Japanese) market is now threatened by Japan (China).</p> <p>2. Japan's (China's) international political influence is too powerful.</p> <p>3. Japan (China) has threatened Chinese (Japanese) social security.</p> <p>4. Chinese (Japanese) territory may be seized by Japan (China).</p>   |
| <b>SUPPORT FOR AGGRESSIVE POLICIES</b>   |
| <p>1. If Japan (China) has aggressive intentions toward China (Japan), I should consider pre-emptive action.</p> <p>2. If China (Japan) is Japan's (China's) target, I will never allow, and will vigorously defend.</p> <p>3. China (Japan) must fortify its army to prepare for the war perhaps happen in the future with Japan (China).</p> <p>4. Whatever happens, we must avoid war with Japan (China). (r)</p> |

| <b>Items of the present article</b>  |
|--|
| <p><b>NATIONALISM</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compare with other countries, I want to see China (Japan) as a more superior country.</li> <li>2. Chinese (Japanese) is the one of the most superior nation in the world</li> <li>3. China (Japan) should have bigger say in deciding United Nation policy.</li> <li>4. China (Japan) should have bigger say in deciding Asia's future.</li> <li>5. China (Japan) obtained enormous achievements depend on Chinese (Japanese) superiority.</li> <li>6. China (Japan) should not sacrifice China's (Japan's) interests for supporting other countries.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>PATRIOTISM</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I love China (Japan).</li> <li>2. I want to live in China (Japan) all my life.</li> <li>3. I am proud to be a Chinese (Japanese).</li> <li>4. I am not much attached to China (Japan). (r)</li> <li>5. I don't want to live in other countries.</li> <li>6. China (Japan) is the best country in the world.</li> </ol>  |
| <p><b>ANGER</b></p> <p>How do you feel about China (Japan).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Angry.</li> <li>2. Annoyed.</li> <li>3. Irritated.</li> </ol>  |

| <b>Items of the present article</b>  |
|--|
| <b>FEAR</b>  |
| <p>How do you feel about China (Japan).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Frightened.</li> <li>2. Bloodcurdling.</li> <li>3. Scary.</li> </ol>   |
| <b>RESPONSIBILITY JUDGMENT</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bank of credit card.</li> <li>2. The police.</li> <li>3. The assailants.</li> <li>4. China.</li> <li>5. The whole of China.</li> <li>6. The victims.</li> <li>7. Japan</li> <li>8. The whole of Japan</li> </ol> |
| <b>CONTACT QUANTITY</b>  |
| <p>How often do you see Chinese in your daily life.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Totally don't see ~ often see.</li> </ol>  |
| <b>CONTACT QUALITY</b>   |
| <p>How did you feel when you contacted with Chinese.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pleasing.</li> <li>2. Cooperative.</li> <li>3. Unpleasant (reversed).</li> </ol>  |

**Items of the present article**

**PERSPECTIVE TAKING**

1. I can image how things look from Chinese perspective.
2. I try to understand Chinese mind from their place.
3. Even though Chinese's mind were different with Japanese, I think it is because they have their own viewpoint and situation.