

# PERSPECTIVE TAKING AND RECEPTION OF REFUGEES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: EVIDENCE FROM SURVEY EXPERIMENT IN THAILAND

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**Abstract:**

This study uniquely contributes to the expanding body of research on perspective taking as a potent tool for enhancing willingness to accept refugees through the cultivation of empathy. While existing research has largely focused on its effects in the Western context, our study fills a crucial gap in the literature by exploring its impact in Southeast Asia, where many refugees seek sanctuary. We conducted a pre-registered survey experiment in Thailand to investigate how perspective taking influences Thai people's willingness to receive refugees from neighboring Myanmar, which has seen an influx of refugee outflows due to a military coup and escalating civil war in 2021. Our results reveal a significant increase in willingness to accept Myanmar refugees among Thai respondents who were prompted to imagine themselves in the shoes of refugees. Notably, other factors such as sympathy for the plight of the Myanmar people, considerations of Thailand's international reputation, and financial burden sharing did not produce similar responses. This finding enhances our understanding of refugee reception by offering a valuable examination of the perspective-taking mechanism in the distinctive context of Southeast Asia.



Xiaojun Li is an Associate Professor of Political Science at NYU Shanghai and Affiliated Professor of Politics in the Wilf Family Department of Politics at NYU. His research lies at the intersection of international relations and comparative politics. Some of his previous and ongoing works have explored the impact of domestic politics on the process and content of foreign economic and security policies and how global supply chains reshape politics of trade and investment. His recent books include *Fragmenting Globalization: The Politics of Preferential Trade Liberalization in China and the United States* (University of Michigan Press 2021) and *Token Forces: How Tiny Troop Deployments became Ubiquitous in UN Peacekeeping* (Cambridge University Press 2022).

**5 January 2024 (Friday)**  
**11:00 AM-12:30 PM (HKT)**

Room LI-5405 (LI)

5/F, Li Dak Sum Yip Yio Chin Academic Building (AC2)  
City University of Hong Kong

How to attend this seminar:

Via zoom

<https://cityu.zoom.us/j/94263290109?pwd=Qy94cktiY010T05Nb2kzak1yTWU4dz09>

Passcode: 138011

or in-person (pre-registration and visitor QR code are needed)

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfL7frC3wfn52i-A7Yge0WsiS-i7\\_m2HI7qPnDL2NizijLeHg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfL7frC3wfn52i-A7Yge0WsiS-i7_m2HI7qPnDL2NizijLeHg/viewform)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the seminar.



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**All are welcome**

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