

Rallying the Masses for Conflict: Identity Triggers in Symbolic Politics Theory

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Abstract

Symbolic politics theory holds that antagonistic myths and symbols that rationalize hostility towards a rival group are the primary cause of intergroup conflict. Group identity (e.g. national, ethnic, and/or religious, etc.) is an extremely important component of symbolic politics because it gives myths and symbols their emotional power. However, previous research has not accounted for how differences in the salience of identity among group members can affect the process of mobilizing against a rival group. Since group identity can be salient or unimportant to individual group members, this study seeks to examine how high and low identifiers respond to various symbolic and realistic threats. Specifically, this study seeks to understand how nationalism can be triggered in low identifiers. Two experiments are proposed. The first will be conducted on American participants and will focus on Sino-American relations, while the second will be conducted on Indian participants and will focus on Sino Indian relations. The treatments in both experiments will cover realistic (economic and military) and symbolic (status and value) threats.¹

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¹ I would like to thank Samuel Gaertner and Bertjan Doosje for their encouragement of this project and for acting as sounding boards for my ideas. I would also like to thank Pooja Rishi and Mary Grace Antony for their insights on Indian politics and Sino-Indian relations and for vetting my Indian treatments.

One of the major puzzles examined in ethno-nationalist politics is the question of what prompts mass populations to be roused with nationalist fervor that oftentimes leads to conflict and violence. Whether one is looking at historical or modern cases, it is very clear that in most instances of nationalist conflict (whether occurring within or between states) the majority of the population appears to be passionate nationalists, exhibiting a strong sense of national pride and hostility towards rival groups or nations.² However, research from psychology has shown that the level of commitment to an in-group varies among group members. On the one hand, some are high identifiers who have a strong sense of collective identity and a high sense of loyalty to the group in question.³ On the other hand, some are low identifiers who emphasize their personal identity over the collective identity and are less loyal to their group. Additionally, psychological studies have found that low identifiers are less likely to respond to symbolic threats and are more likely to disassociate from their in-groups when confronted with various identity threats.⁴ Exploring the low/high identifier dichotomy as it pertains to nationalist politics, the current study seeks to examine first, if it is possible to trigger nationalist identity in low identifiers, and second, how such a process occurs. Taking into consideration findings from symbolic politics research on ethnic politics and findings from psychological research on how low and high identifiers respond to different types of group threats, I propose that in the early stages of nationalist conflict (prior to the onset of violence) nationalist identity can be triggered

² Greenfeld, Liah. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992; Horowitz, Donald L. *Ethnic groups in conflict*. University of California Press, 1985; Kaufman, Stuart J. *Modern hatreds: The symbolic politics of ethnic war*. Cornell University Press, 2001; Petersen, Roger D. *Understanding ethnic violence: Fear, hatred, and resentment in twentieth-century Eastern Europe*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

³ Given that research on nationalism has focused on both intra and interstate conflicts, for the sake of efficiency I will simply refer to both types of conflict as group conflict. This is appropriate given that the focus of this study is identity, and identity groups can be comprised of ethnic identities within states or national identities between states.

⁴ For an extensive review of how identifiers respond to identity threats see Branscombe, Nyla R., Naomi Ellemers, Russell Spears, and Bertjan Doosje. "The context and content of social identity threat." In Nyla R., Naomi Ellemers, Russell Spears, and Bertjan Doosje (eds), *Social identity: Context, commitment, content*, Oxford, England: Blackwell Science, 1999, pp. 35-58.

in low identifiers under certain conditions. First, low identifiers are more likely to respond to concerns over group status. Low identifiers in low status groups are more likely to become nationalistic when the prospect for increasing the status of their group exists. Additionally, low identifiers in high status groups are more likely to become nationalistic when an out-group threatens to lower the status of their in-group. Second, nationalist identity is likely to be triggered in low identifiers when the core values of their in-group (those that are uncontested within the group) are threatened by the out-group. I propose to test this theory with two experiments. The first will be conducted on American participants and will focus on Sino-American relations, while the second will be conducted on Indian participants and will focus on Sino-Indian relations. The treatments in both experiments will center on various realistic (economic and military) and symbolic (status and value) threats. The paper will proceed as follows. First, I will discuss current international relations research on nationalist politics and how neglecting the low/high identifier dynamic has led to an incomplete understanding of nationalist mobilization. Second, I review psychological research on high and low identifiers and use insights from that research to develop a number of hypotheses for how nationalist identity can be triggered in low identifiers. Third, I will discuss the design for the American and Indian experiments, the treatments for which will be based on a variety of realistic and symbolic threats. Lastly, I will discuss how the data will be analyzed, and offer a brief discussion of possible findings and implications.

THE ROLE OF IDENTITY IN NATIONALIST POLITICS

Similar to the broader field of international relations, the study of nationalist politics has been divided between rationalist and ideational approaches, each of which have developed

explanations for why the masses become nationalistic. Rationalist approaches, which are derived from a variety of realist and rational choice theories, take an instrumentalist view of identity, where national or group identification is little more than a tool used by groups to achieve their material goals.⁵ Taking this further, some scholars have argued that identity is merely a device to be manipulated by elites pursuing personal political aims such as taking or maintaining power.⁶

Hence, for rationalist approaches the major causes of conflict stem from realistic threats (e.g. tangible threats to safety, political rights, and economic well-being). On the one hand, conflict can result from an unequal distribution of resources or a dramatic decline in living standards prompted by an economic downturn.⁷ On the other hand, conflict can result from security dilemmas driven by a lack of information or intentionally biased information, commitment problems, and fears of violence or an uncertain future. Rationalists argue that each of the factors can drive groups to conflict, even if they seek to avoid it. From this perspective, the security dilemma can foster intergroup hatreds and the embracing of nationalism. Seen as a natural consequence of anarchy, the security dilemma thus creates an uneasy situation where both sides misinterpret each other's actions, leading to further mistrust and suspicion.⁸

Rationalist approaches contend that mass populations adopt nationalist ideologies and support conflict for a variety of rational reasons related to economic security, safety, and their

⁵ Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war." *American political science review* 97, no. 01 (2003): 75-90; Lake, David A., and Donald S. Rothchild, eds. *The international spread of ethnic conflict: Fear, diffusion, and escalation*. Princeton University Press, 1998; Lake, David A., and Donald Rothchild. "Containing fear: The origins and management of ethnic conflict." *International security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 41-75; Posen, Barry R. "The security dilemma and ethnic conflict." *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 27-47.

⁶ Brass, Paul R. *Theft of an idol: Text and context in the representation of collective violence*. Princeton University Press, 1997; Snyder, Jack, and Karen Ballentine. "Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas." *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 5-40.

⁷ Collier, Paul. *Economic causes of civil conflict and their implications for policy*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2000; Miguel, Edward, Shanker Satyanath, and Ernest Sergenti. "Economic shocks and civil conflict: An instrumental variables approach." *Journal of political Economy* 112, no. 4 (2004): 725-753; Fearon and Laitin 2003.

⁸ Lake and Rothchild 1996; Posen 1993.

standing within the in-group. For example, in intrastate conflicts extremists can use peer pressure to make people increase their ethnic or nationalist identity as a way of securing their status within the group. Therefore, people may pretend to be nationalists for the sake of avoiding conflict with members of their own group.⁹ Hardin takes this a step further, contending that nationalist mobilization is a “tipping process” initiated by extremists. He notes that as groups recruit more people and expand in size, it becomes much easier to pressure more people to join. Peer pressure can be based on fear of reprisals from one’s own group, or the promise of success for the in-group. He also notes that individuals may be persuaded to participate in violence because of “selective incentives” (e.g. the promise of material gains or the threat of being killed).¹⁰

In sum, rationalist approaches claim that identity (whether ethnic or national) is instrumentally used by groups to pursue their material goals. A problem with rationalist approaches is that they do not offer a compelling explanation for why individuals would opt to support collective nationalist goals at the price of their own individual interests.¹¹ The exception to this is when faces either the threat of being killed by extremists in one’s own group or the threat of violence from the out-group, all of which usually occur after nationalist mobilization.¹² This inability to explain this phenomenon is particularly problematic because rationalist scholars tend to imply that ethnic or nationalist extremists constitute a small, yet powerful minority. The

⁹ Kuran, Timur. "Ethnic dissimilation and its international diffusion." In David Lake and Donald Rothchild (eds), *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation* (1998): 35-60.

¹⁰ Hardin, Russell. *One for all: The logic of group conflict*. Princeton University Press, 1997.

¹¹ Kaufman 2001; Varshney, Ashutosh. "Nationalism, ethnic conflict, and rationality." *Perspective on Politics* 1, no. 01 (2003): 85-99.

¹² Kaufman 2001 notes that in many ethnic conflicts, nationalism takes hold in the population before the outbreak of violence.

majority as it is intimidated, are not true believers, but low identifiers rationally responding to the economic climate, the security dilemma, and/or incomplete information.¹³

Countering rationalist approaches are those advancing ideational theories such as social constructivism, cultural politics, and political psychology.¹⁴ These approaches contend that identity (whether ethnic or national) is a social construction based on shared understandings both within and between groups.¹⁵ Identity is therefore more than a tool that groups can switch on or off when it behooves their interests. Instead, it is basis for how groups define themselves, their interests, and others. Furthermore, the artifacts upon which identity is based (religion, culture, language, prejudices, etc.) have an evocative quality in that they can rouse strong emotional responses in-group members.¹⁶ However, it is important to note that identity is not static, as it can be created or redefined by elites and its salience can be influenced by situational or contextual factors.¹⁷

For ideational approaches intergroup hostilities stem from symbolic threats (e.g. differences in values and beliefs and perceptions of group worth and status).¹⁸ Ideational approaches have pointed out various ways that identity can lead to conflict between groups. First, the competition for group worth can lead to conflict, where weak groups seek to enhance their status, while strong groups seek to maintain it.¹⁹ Second, groups may conflict with others

¹³ Hardin 1997; Kuran 1998.

¹⁴ Ideational approaches often build upon and synthesize theories from multiple disciplines such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, and cognitive science.

¹⁵ Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso Books, 2006;

Nagel, Joane. "Constructing ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture." *Social problems* (1994): 152-176.

¹⁶ Horowitz 1985; Kaufman 2001; Smith, Anthony D. *The ethnic origins of nations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.

¹⁷ Guibernau, Montserrat, and John Hutchinson, eds. *Understanding nationalism*. Blackwell Publishing, 2001; Vail, Leroy, ed. *The creation of tribalism in Southern Africa*. University of California Press, 1989.

¹⁸ Greenfeld 1992; Horowitz 1985; Kaufman 2001.

¹⁹ Greenfeld 1992; Horowitz 1985; Scheff, Thomas J. *Bloody revenge: Emotions, nationalism, and war*. Westview Press, 1994.

for the sake of establishing their own sense distinctiveness.²⁰ Third, groups may fear extinction, either in the form of the loss of their culture or the actual extinction of their group via genocide. It should be noted that these identity threats can be real or perceived. Moreover, group's responses to these threats are emotionally driven, where feelings of shame, resentment, fear, and anxiety prompt groups to misperceive the actions of others and support for chauvinistic policies.²¹

One of the more compelling ideational explanations is symbolic politics theory, which contends that identity itself is a major source of conflict. Specifically, within any group culture there exist antagonistic myths and symbols that define the in-group and cast rival groups as threats, thus providing a rationalization for aggression. These myths and symbols are emotionally charged and may be comprised of myths (e.g. religion, language, common descent, sacred territory, etc.) or experiences (previous domination, military defeat, genocide, etc.).²² Therefore, fear and chauvinistic attitudes are built into a group's culture, and the masses respond to the symbols and leaders that evoke the strongest emotional response. Under this approach, the process leading to group conflict includes the drive for superiority among the masses and elites and a security dilemma. Elites then feed on the identity threat posed by the rival group to promote aggressive policies to discriminate or dominate the group.²³ In sum, ideational approaches contend that identity is not just a social category that groups can identify with when needed, but rather it provides the basis for how groups define themselves and others.

Furthermore, the ideas that comprise identity can be laden with prejudice, fear and hatred of

²⁰ Horowitz 1985; Guzzini, Stefano, ed. *The return of geopolitics in Europe?: Social mechanisms and foreign policy identity crises*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.

²¹ Horowitz 1985; Kaufman 2001; Kaufman, Stuart J. "Symbolic politics or rational choice? Testing theories of extreme ethnic violence." *International Security* 30, no. 4 (2006): 45-86.

²² Kaufman 2001; 2006.

²³ Kaufman 2001; 2006; Grillo, Michael C. "The Role of Emotions in Discriminatory Ethno- Religious Politics: An Experimental Study of Anti-Muslim Politics in the United States." *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 15, no. 04 (2014): 583-603.

other groups. Identity threats often produce strong emotional responses that lead to further hostility and aggression.

While the aforementioned rationalist and ideational approaches from international relations and comparative politics have produced a number of important insights about the role that identity plays in the development of nationalism and the escalation of intra and interstate conflicts, these various approaches have based their discussions on an incomplete understanding of identity.

CAPTURING THE COMPLEXITY OF IDENTITY

In the past two decades, the discipline of international relations has begun to take identity more seriously. This is a direct result of the efforts of constructivists, who have challenged the rational materialism of traditional approaches such as realism and neo-liberalism.²⁴ While ideational approaches such as constructivism and post modernism have produced a number of important findings about how identity influences how agents define themselves and others, develop their self-interests, and interact with other agents, the discipline has for the most part tended to treat identity as a monolith.²⁵

The reasons for this are two-fold. First, the discipline has privileged the structural level of analysis, and the state level to a lesser degree. Thus, the individual level of analysis and the

²⁴ Adler, Emanuel. "Seizing the middle ground: constructivism in world politics." *European journal of international relations* 3, no. 3 (1997): 319-363; Checkel, Jeffrey T. "The constructive turn in international relations theory." *World politics* 50, no. 02 (1998): 324-348; Lapid, Yosef, and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, eds. *The return of culture and identity in IR theory*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996.

²⁵ For excellent discussion of this point see Khan, MA Muqtedar. *Jihad for Jerusalem: identity and strategy in international relations*. Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004. Additionally, some scholars are beginning to problematize identity, see Shannon, Vaughn P., and Paul A. Kowert, eds. *Psychology and constructivism in international relations: An ideational alliance*. University of Michigan Press, 2012.

psychological and cognitive micro-foundations of human behavior have been neglected.²⁶

Second, while some scholars have attempted to understand the role that psychology plays in world politics, the vast majority of scholars studying identity have privileged sociological theory over psychological theory, as the latter has often been regarded as too individualist and reductionist.²⁷ Thus, IR scholars have neglected important individual differences within identity groups that explain variation in how agents perceive themselves in relation to in-groups and out-groups, internalize in-group norms, and respond to inter and intragroup threats.²⁸ As I will discuss in the following sections, a particularly important aspect of identity not yet examined in international relations is how one's level of commitment to a particular identity can influence how they respond to threats.

LEVEL OF COMMITMENT TO THE GROUP AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE

In their examinations of how social identity can be triggered, social and political psychologists have found that one's level of commitment to the social group in question is an important mediating variable that influences how individuals respond to both realistic and symbolic threats. Within any identity group, there are high identifiers and low identifiers. High identifiers exhibit a strong attachment to the in-group and tend to be loyal, concerned with the position of their group relative to others, and willing to take action for their group. Contrariwise, low identifiers are more likely to prioritize their individual needs above the group. Hence, they tend to exhibit less devotion and loyalty to the in-group²⁹.

²⁶ Buzan, Barry. "The level of analysis problem in international relations reconsidered." In Booth, Ken, and Steve Smith, eds. *International relations theory today* (1995): 198-216.

²⁷ McDermott, Rose. *Political psychology in international relations*. University of Michigan Press, 2004; Wight, Colin. *Agents, structures and international relations: politics as ontology*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.

²⁸ See Kaufman, Stuart J. "Constructivism, Social Psychology, and Interlocking Theory," 1.2012 (25 June 2012). Duck of Minerva Working Paper. Available online at <http://www.whiteoliphaunt.com/duckofminerva/sample-page>.

²⁹ Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999, pp. 36-47.

Studies examining both artificial and real ethno-nationalist groups have repeatedly found that high identifiers tend to respond to symbolic threats more so than low identifiers.³⁰ For example, categorization (e.g. being categorized into a group by an outsider) does not elicit a response from high identifiers because they do not view being classified into their in-group as a threat.³¹ Studies have found that this is even the case when the classification is based on negative stereotypes about the in-group.³² Furthermore, when faced with distinctiveness and value threats related to status and competence, high identifiers tend to assert their identity, insult the out-group, engage in self-stereotyping, and believe that all members of the group are unified and are high identifiers³³. Moreover, when high identifiers face a value threat to the morality of their in-group, they tend to become defensive and try to justify the behaviors of their group. When confronted with any type of identity threat, research suggests that high identifiers tend to view out-groups more negatively and exhibit prejudice against them.³⁴

Conversely, when low identifiers face categorization, distinctiveness, and any group value threats, they tend to experience emotional distress, emphasize their personal identity, and disengage from the in-group in question. Additionally, in instances when an out-group member

³⁰ Tausch, Nicole, Miles Hewstone, Jared Kenworthy, Ed Cairns, and Oliver Christ. "Cross-Community Contact, Perceived Status Differences, and Intergroup Attitudes in Northern Ireland: The Mediating Roles of Individual-level versus Group-level Threats and the Moderating Role of Social Identification." *Political Psychology* 28, no. 1 (2007): 53-68.

³¹ Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999, pp. 36-47.

³² Ellemers, Naomi, Henk Wilke, and Ad Van Knippenberg. "Effects of the legitimacy of low group or individual status on individual and collective status-enhancement strategies." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 64, no. 5 (1993): 766; Dion, Kenneth L. "Responses to perceived discrimination and relative deprivation." In *Relative deprivation and social comparison: The Ontario Symposium*, vol. 4, pp. 159-179. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1986.

³³ Ellemers, Naomi, Russell Spears, and Bertjan Doosje. "Sticking together or falling apart: In-group identification as a psychological determinant of group commitment versus individual mobility." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 72.3 (1997): 617; Doosje, Bertjan, Naomi Ellemers, and Russell Spears. "Perceived intragroup variability as a function of group status and identification." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 31, no. 5 (1995): 410-436.

³⁴ Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999, pp.46-50.

challenges the in-group's morality, low identifiers will often stop engaging in the behavior in question.³⁵

While research on how and low identifiers respond to symbolic threats suggest a distinct difference between the two, results regarding realistic threat have been mixed. For example, one study examining native Israelis' attitudes towards Russian immigrants found that high identifiers have a stronger response to realistic threats than low identifiers.³⁶ Another study examining Catholic and Protestant attitudes towards each other in Northern Ireland found no differences between high and low identifiers.³⁷ The results of the second study make sense in that realistic threats (e.g. loss of political rights or discrimination) can impact all members of a group, whether they are high or low identifiers.³⁸ One possibility for the difference in these findings is that in some contexts, realistic threats may be more salient than in others. One study suggests that intergroup anxiety, which is a feeling of distress that arises when interacting with members of other groups, is a predictor of prejudice among low identifiers.³⁹ Intergroup anxiety is often categorized as a personal threat, as opposed to a group threat.⁴⁰

Though not directly examining differences between high and low identifiers, an experimental test of symbolic politics theory on American participants found that when exposed to anti-Muslim nationalist rhetoric (both symbolic and realistic) that proposed discrimination against Muslims, high identifiers experienced strong emotional responses that led to support for

³⁵ Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999, pp. 36-50.

³⁶ Bizman, Aharon, and Yoel Yinon. "Intergroup and interpersonal threats as determinants of prejudice: The moderating role of in-group identification." *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 23, no. 3 (2001): 191-196.

³⁷ Tausch, et al., 2007.

³⁸ Cairns, Edward. "Intergroup contact in Northern Ireland." In Henri Tajfel (ed), *Social identity and intergroup relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1982, pp. 277-298). .

Tausch, et al., 2007, p. 64

³⁹ Bizman and Yinon 2001

⁴⁰ Riek, Blake M., Eric W. Mania, and Samuel L. Gaertner. "Intergroup threat and outgroup attitudes: A meta-analytic review." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 10, no. 4 (2006): 336-353.

the policies, while low identifiers experienced anger and frustration, which led to a rejection of the policies. A major finding of the study was that for individuals who had a preexisting dislike of Muslims, how the Muslim threat was framed did not matter. For these individuals, simply browbeating Muslims and proposing discrimination prompted an increase in negative (e.g. a sense of threat) and positive emotions (e.g. pride, excitement, confidence, and optimism for America's future), which led to support for discriminatory policies against that group.⁴¹

When considering all of the aforementioned research on ethnic conflict and nationalism from comparative politics and international relations and psychological research on the mediating role of group commitment, an interesting empirical puzzle emerges.

THE EMPIRICAL PUZZLE

Given their instrumentalist approach to identity, rationalist approaches imply that within any given society most people are probably low identifiers who pretend to be high identifiers when it is in their rational interests to do so.⁴² On the other end of the spectrum, ideational approaches imply that most people are high identifiers who have a strong emotional attachment to their group and are thus deeply concerned about their group's ability to express their identity and their group's status relative to other groups.⁴³ And then there is social psychology, which has empirically demonstrated that within any group there are high and low identifiers who significantly differ in how they respond to symbolic threats, and may differ in how they respond

⁴¹ Grillo 2014.

⁴² Fearon, James D. "Ethnic war as a commitment problem." In *Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association*, pp. 2-5. 1994; Hardin 1997, Kuran 1998,

⁴³ Horowitz 1985; Kaufman 2001, 2006; Oberschall, Anthony. "The manipulation of ethnicity: from ethnic cooperation to violence and war in Yugoslavia." *Ethnic and racial studies* 23, no. 6 (2000): 982-1001;

to realistic threats. Particularly, evidence from numerous studies suggests that low identifiers tend to distance themselves from their in-group when confronted with symbolic threats.⁴⁴

At the same time however, previous research on nationalist politics, in both comparative politics and international relations, suggest that prior to, and during ethnic or nationalist conflicts, a majority of the mass population rallies behind a nationalist cause⁴⁵. Furthermore, there is strong evidence that symbolic politics (e.g. differences in religion, culture, and ethnicity that are significantly driven by prejudices) tend to be the driving force of aggressive identity politics, where it is clear that people are simply not pretending to be nationalists.⁴⁶

When considering the insights from these various strands of research, it appears that at some point in the process of nationalist mobilization, low identifiers become high identifiers in a true sense, where individuals change from not having a strong affinity to the in-group to having a strong identification with the in-group. Yet, how does this happen? What are the causal mechanisms at play? This is an extremely important question yet to be systematically addressed in the fields of political science and psychology.

While research has alluded to the notion of low identifiers becoming high identifiers, examinations of ethnic and nationalist politics have almost exclusively relied on evidence from political elites (e.g. speeches and writings, government propaganda and policies, etc.) and/or interviews from participants.⁴⁷ From this evidence, scholars have attempted to make inferences about the motivations of the masses. This evidence is problematic for a number of reasons.

First, elite actions cannot provide evidence for the motivations of individuals and groups at the

⁴⁴ Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999, pp. 36-50

⁴⁵ Kaufman 2001 provides compelling evidence to suggest that in many of the ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe, significant portions of the mass populations were ethnic extremists (i.e. high identifiers).

⁴⁶ Horowitz 1985, Kaufman 2001, 2006; Tambiah, Stanley Jeyaraja. *Buddhism betrayed?: Religion, politics, and violence in Sri Lanka*. University of Chicago Press, 1992; Uvin, Peter. "Ethnicity and power in Burundi and Rwanda: Different paths to mass violence." *Comparative politics* (1999): 253-271.

⁴⁷ Kaufman 2001; Peterson 2002; Snyder and Ballentine 1996; Scheff 1994

masses level. Second, interviews with participants in the mass level can be problematic because their recollections of events may be inaccurate, especially when referencing traumatic events.⁴⁸ Third, observing the external behavior of the masses is also not adequate because there can be a multitude of motivations that can explain any given behavior.

While social and political psychologists have explored, via surveys and experiments, the different ways that high and low identifiers respond to identity threats, they have not directly explored the question of whether, or how, a low identifier can become a high identifier. While some studies have indirectly examined the phenomenon, they are problematic for a number of reasons. First, psychological studies usually treat identity, and commitment to it, as an independent variable that leads to other behaviors.⁴⁹ Thus, psychologists examining group threat have not attempted to manipulate identity to determine whether certain threats can prompt a change in the salience of identity. Second, psychologists examine commitment to identity and prejudice against out-groups as two separate phenomena, whereas in nationalism they are combined.⁵⁰ Thus, a proper understanding of nationalism needs to examine the interplay between 1) the level identification with, and pride for the nation, 2) whether one believes their nation is superior others and 4) whether one dislikes out-groups. Third, researchers have conceptualized and measured realistic and symbolic threats in terms of how they affect the

⁴⁸ Research in cognitive psychology has repeatedly shown that memory is unreliable, and that oftentimes individuals subconsciously make up memories to fill in gaps in their recollections. See Roediger, Henry L., and Kathleen B. McDermott. "Creating false memories: Remembering words not presented in lists." *Journal of experimental psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 21, no. 4 (1995): 803; Brown, Daniel, Alan W. Schefflin, and D. Corydon Hammond. *Memory, trauma treatment, and the law*. WW Norton & Co, 1998; Pezdek, Kathy Ed, and William P. Banks. *The recovered memory/false memory debate*. Academic Press, 1996.

⁴⁹ See Bizman and Yninon 2001; Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999; Tausch et al. 2007; Castano, Emanuele, Vincent Yzerbyt, David Bourguignon, and Eléonore Seron. "Who may enter? The impact of in-group identification on in-group/out-group categorization." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 38, no. 3 (2002): 315-322.

⁵⁰ It is important to make the distinction between patriotism and nationalism. Patriotism refers to having a love of, or a sense of pride in one's country, which does not include a dislike of other groups, whereas nationalism involves both the love and pride of patriotism, coupled with a dislike of out-groups and sense of superiority to them. See De Figueiredo, Rui JP, and Zachary Elkins. "Are patriots bigots? An inquiry into the vices of in-group pride." *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 1 (2003): 171-188.

group, while personal threat has been measured via interpersonal anxiety.⁵¹ Research has not parsed out whether individuals perceive realistic and symbolic threats as individual or collective threats. This is important, because given that research suggests low identifiers are more self-interest driven, the key to getting them to identify more with their in-group may lie in them perceiving the group threat as a personal threat.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Taking into account the various empirical findings from political science and psychology, two explanations for how low identifiers can become high identifiers emerge. One explanation is that low identifiers may simply be the self-interest driven actors posited by rationalist approaches. This is consistent with research, which has found that low identifiers are generally more concerned with their personal identity and interests, as opposed to those of their group. Moreover, low identifiers are less likely to respond to symbolic threats, the usual response to which is to further distance oneself from the in-group.⁵²

Hence, low identifiers may only respond to realistic threats to material interests (e.g. economic well-being and security), and their responses to such threats are driven by the degree to which they believe their individual interests are threatened. From this perspective, if a low identifier believes that there is a serious threat to their personal material interests, they may increase their identification with their in-group and hostility towards the out-group as a way of coping with the threat and enhancing their sense of wellbeing. The following hypotheses can be drawn from this theory:

⁵¹ Stephan, Walter G., and Cookie White Stephan. "Intergroup anxiety." *Journal of social issues* 41, no. 3 (1985): 157-175.

⁵² Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999

- H₁ Low identifiers are more likely to respond to realistic threats to their material well-being.
- H₂ Low identifiers are more likely to increase their in-group identification when they believe that a rival group is threatening their personal material interests.
- H₃ Low identifiers are more likely to exhibit increased hostility towards a rival group when they believe a the rival group is threatening their personal material interests.

An alternative set of explanations that I propose are based on symbolic politics theory. Specifically, I contend that that low identifiers only respond to certain types of symbolic threats. The first of these threats is status. Numerous studies have suggested that when confronted with categorization, distinctiveness, group value, morality, and exaggerated emblematic threats to survival, low identifiers are more likely to disengage with the in-group.⁵³ However, research has found that low identifiers respond differently to status threats. For example, studies suggest that low identifiers are likely to disassociate from low status groups, but are more likely to acknowledge identification when there is a possibility of increasing the status of their in-group.⁵⁴

Interestingly, psychologists have not directly tested how low identifiers in high status groups respond to the threat of their in-group's status being lowered. However, a meta-analysis of 92 studies found that high status groups are more likely to exhibit higher levels of identification and more negative attitudes towards out-groups (Bettencourt, Door, Charlton, & Hume 2001). Therefore, low identifiers in high status groups may increase their identification and hostility towards the out-group when their group's status is threatened for the sake of maintaining high status. The following hypotheses can be drawn from this theory:

⁵³ For a review of these various studies see Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999, also see Grillo 2014.

⁵⁴ Doosje, Bertjan, Russell Spears, and Naomi Ellemers. "Social identity as both cause and effect: The development of group identification in response to anticipated and actual changes in the intergroup status hierarchy." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 41, no. 1 (2002): 57-76; Spears, Doosje Ellemers 1997; Scheepers, Daan, and Naomi Ellemers. "When the pressure is up: The assessment of social identity threat in low and high status groups." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 41, no. 2 (2005): 192-200.

- H₄ Low identifiers are more likely to respond to status threats.
- H₅ Low identifiers in a high status group will increase their in-group identification when a rival group threatens to lower the status of the in-group.
- H₆ Low identifiers in a high status group are more likely to exhibit increased hostility towards a rival group when the rival group threatens to lower the status of the in-group.

Another symbolic threat that could prompt an increase in identification is a threat to the core values of the group. This explanation is derived from symbolist research in political science and sociology. All group identity is based on a “myth nomer” or “myth-symbol complex” that defines both the in-group and out-group.⁵⁵ Low identifiers need to have some connection to the in-group, otherwise they would not be members of the group. Low identification implies a weak level of affinity and commitment to the in-group, not a complete lack thereof. In this context, core values refer to the non-controversial and non-contested values of the in-group that all members agree on. For example, all Americans agree on the core values of democracy, personal liberty, and freedom of opportunity. Hence, a low identifier may become a high identifier and exhibit increased hostility when the base values of identity are threatened. The following hypotheses can be drawn from this theory:

- H₇ Low identifiers are more likely to respond to threats to the core values of their in-group.
- H₈ Low identifiers are more likely to increase their in-group identification when a rival group threatens the core values of their in-group.
- H₉ Low identifiers are more likely to exhibit increased hostility towards a rival group when the rival group threatens the core values of the in-group.

⁵⁵ See Kaufman 2001, 2006; Smith 1986.

METHOD

The hypotheses will be tested with two experiments. The context for the first experiment will be American national identity and how it influences attitudes about Sino-American relations, while for the second it will be Indian national identity and Sino-Indian relations. The reason for conducting experiments in two different countries is two-fold. First, since this study is psychologically driven, examining identity change in a comparative context better situates the study into the field of international relations. Second, and most importantly, given that major criticisms of the experimental method include low external validity, having results from two different countries can help to verify if the causal mechanisms at play are generalizable or contingent upon different cultural contexts.⁵⁶ Additionally, having China as the source of threat in both experiments will allow for similar designs, which allow for more precise and meaningful cross-national comparison of the results.

Participants

The two experiments will be conducted online. Both American and Indian participants will be recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Each participant will be compensated \$0.50 for completing the experiment. MTurk is an online marketplace that allows businesses and researchers to recruit and pay workers to complete tasks for a very low cost. In recent years, social scientists from a variety of disciplines have used MTurk to recruit research participants. Moreover, a number of classic psychology studies have been replicated using

⁵⁶ Lucas, Jeffrey W. "Theory-testing, generalization, and the problem of external validity." *Sociological Theory* 21, no. 3 (2003): 236-253;

MTurk samples, demonstrating that the sample pool obtained from the system is comparable to college students and other convenience samples.⁵⁷

Although MTurk samples have been criticized for not being representative of the larger population, this will not be problematic for the current study. First, because experiments utilize random assignment, which makes all groups roughly equal, whether the sample is representative is a non-issue. Second, the fact that MTurk samples have a liberal skew is an advantage for this study.⁵⁸ Since liberals tend to be less nationalistic, there will be a higher proportion of low identifiers in both samples, which is the group I am specifically targeting. Furthermore, given that liberals are usually opposed to chauvinistic nationalism, this will make it more difficult to find a significant effect. Therefore, any significant effects for identity change will be more meaningful.

One thousand participants will be recruited for the experiments (500 in each country). This will allow for roughly 100 participants in each experimental condition. A priori power analysis suggests that this sample size well exceeds the minimum requirements for the statistical procedures that will be used to analyze the data. Given that MTurk is widely used in the United States and India, obtaining 500 participants in each country is a realistic benchmark. My previous experiences conducting research on MTurk also suggests that obtaining the required sample size will be easy.

⁵⁷ Berinsky, Adam J., Gregory A. Huber, and Gabriel S. Lenz. "Evaluating online labor markets for experimental research: Amazon. com's Mechanical Turk." *Political Analysis* 20, no. 3 (2012): 351-368.

⁵⁸ Christensen, D. P., and David M. Glick. "Crowdsourcing panel studies and real-time experiments in MTurk." *The Political Methodologist* 20, no. 2 (2013).

Procedure

Both experiments will utilize a between subjects design and will be administered online through SurveyMonkey. The Indian experiment will be administered in English, though the materials will be converted to British English. The designs for the two experiments will be identical, though the treatments will differ slightly in each of the experiments, as each country's relationship with China is contextually different. The experimental procedure will be carried out as follows. First, participants will complete a pre-test survey eliciting demographic information, political and religious views, national identity, and threat perceptions of China and other countries. Second, as a distraction measure, participants will complete the Edinburgh handedness inventory, which assesses the consistency to which one uses their left or right hands for 10 unimanual tasks (e.g. brushing one's teeth, combing hair, etc.). Third, SurveyMonkey will then randomly assign participants to one of five conditions, four of which will focus on a specific realistic or symbolic threat scenario. Fourth, participants will complete a post-test survey that will again measure national identity and threat perceptions of China and other countries. Additionally, the post-test will also assess participants' emotional reactions to the treatments, the degree to which they believe China constitutes a personal or national threat, and whether their respective countries should initiate aggressive policies against China. Lastly, participants will read a debriefing statement explaining the purpose of the study and revealing how the treatments were embellished.

Experimental Treatments

The five experimental conditions are detailed below in Table 1. The first condition is the control group, which will not receive a treatment. After completing the handedness inventory,

participants in this condition will complete the post-test survey. In the remaining conditions, before completing the post-test survey, participants will read one of four fabricated news articles, each of which will highlight a specific realistic or symbolic threat posed by China.

Table 1: Experimental Conditions and Treatments

Condition	Treatment	Threat Type
1	Control - No Treatment	N/A
2	Economic	Realistic
3	Military	Realistic
4	Status	Symbolic
5	Core Values	Symbolic

Conditions 2 and 3 will highlight realistic threats (economic and military respectively), while conditions 3 and 4 will highlight symbolic threats (lowering of status or status enhancement and core values). The content for each of the treatments consisted of material from various editorials, reviews, and news reports that were lifted verbatim and reassembled to form short news stories. This was done to maintain the authenticity of the journalistic writing style from the original content. American participants will be told the news stories are from CNN.com, while Indian participants will be told the stories come from NDTV.com (New Delhi Television).

The context for the realistic and symbolic threats used in the American experiment is as follows (see Appendix 1). In condition 2, the economic threat will focus on how China has been initiating aggressive economic policies to undermine the US (e.g. currency manipulation, subsidizing industries, monopolizing natural resources) and how it plans to cripple the American economy by dumping US bonds and dollars on the international market, which will devalue the dollar and cause massive inflation and unemployment. For condition 3, the military threat

centers on China's recent expansionist efforts against US allies in the Pacific (where the US has military bases) and China's ability to launch cyber-attacks against the US, which could impact the banking system and the US military's ability to respond to a crisis. In condition 3, the treatment focuses on how China's goal is to become the global hegemonic power and how it is the process of surpassing the US militarily and economically. Lastly, condition 4 emphasizes how China threatens US core values of democracy, human rights, and free markets. The article in this condition notes how China spreading its governmental model abroad (which many developing countries find appealing) and how the Chinese media often mocks the American political system for being weak and inefficient.

For the Indian experiment, the content of threats referenced in the conditions were modified slightly to match the context of Sino-Indian relations (see Appendix 2). In condition 1 the economic threat focuses on the same Chinese economic policies addressed in the American version as well as China's goal of shutting India out of the African market to monopolize all of the natural resources on that continent, which would have devastating effects on the Indian economy. For the condition 2, the military threat centers on China's expansionist policies in the Pacific and cyber threats, as well as its military support for Pakistan, its recent incursions across the Indian border, and China's claims on the entirety of the Indian state Arunachal Pradesh.

Given that India is a lesser power relative to China, and most Indians recognize this, condition 3 focuses on the prospect of enhancing India's military and economic capabilities to eventually surpass China as the great power in the region. The article in this condition focuses on how the Indian workforce is growing at a faster rate than the Chinese and can compete with Chinese wages. Additionally, it stresses how India's consumer market and software industries are growing, all of which will eventually surpass China's economy. Moreover, this treatment

notes how India's military power is growing, as it is acquiring better military hardware from western powers and developing a sophisticated aerospace industry, all of which will give India an advantage over China in the coming decades. Finally, condition 4, similar to its US counterpart, emphasizes how China threatens Indian core values of democracy, human rights, and multiculturalism by spreading its governmental model abroad and mocking the Indian political system.

Variables

Dependent Variables: This study will examine two dependent variables, nationalism and policies towards China. Nationalism will be measured with six questions taken from the International Social Survey Program's (ISSP) 2003 national identity scale. The six questions, which were designed to measure nationalism, will be administered in both the pre and post-test surveys to assess if any of the treatments prompted an increase in nationalism. Respondents will be asked the extent to which they agree or disagree (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree) with the following statements:

- The United States (*India*) is a better country than most other countries.
- The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like the United States (*India*)
- I would rather be a citizen of the United States (*India*) than of any other country in the world.
- It is impossible for people who do not share American (*Indian*) customs and traditions to become fully American (*Indian*).
- People should support their country even if the country is in the wrong.
- The United States (*India*) should follow its own interests, even if this leads to conflicts with other nations.

The responses will then be computed in a composite measure of nationalism. When combined, the six variables will form a scale ranging from 6 to 30. Splitting the scale into two halves based on the median (18), participants with scores from 5 to 18 will be classified as low identifiers, while those with scores from 19 to 30 will be classified as high identifiers.

The second dependent variable will be policies towards China. This variable will be measured with three questions that will also be combined into a composite measure.

Respondents will be asked the extent to which they agree or disagree (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree) with the following statements:

- The United States (*India*) should be tough with China on trade and economic issues.
- The United States (*India*) should prevent China from expanding its global influence.
- The United States (*India*) should prepare for a military conflict with China.

Mediating Variables: The analysis will also examine three mediating variables, negative affect, threat perceptions of China, and personal threat. Negative affect will be measured with a series items taken from the PANAS-X Manual for the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, which is widely used in psychology. After reading one of the treatments, participants will be asked the extent to which they feel (1-slightly/not at all to 5-extremely) a variety of negative emotions (e.g. sad, distressed, angry, disgusted, hostile, afraid, and frustrated). Participants will also be asked to assess their feeling of positive emotions (cheerful, joyful, proud, strong, inspired), which will be examined for participants exposed to the India status enhancement treatment.

The second mediating variable is threat perceptions of China. In the pre and post-test surveys, participants will be asked the degree to which they believe that China (as well as a number of other countries) is a threat (1-no threat to 10-severe threat). The third mediating is personal threat. Participants will be asked “How concerned are you personally about you yourself or a family member being negatively impacted by China’s policies towards the United States (*or India*)?” Responses will range from 1-not at all concerned to 5-extremely concerned.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ This question was taken from Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Theresa Capelos, and Colin Provost. "The consequences of terrorism: Disentangling the effects of personal and national threat." *Political Psychology* 23, no. 3 (2002): 485-509.

Independent and Control Variables: The independent variable will be condition, the coding for which is based on the treatment that participants receive (1-control, 2-economic threat, 3-military threat, 4-status threat/enhancement, and 5-core values threat). The analysis will also examine a series of control variables such as sex, age, education, racial background (US only), religious affiliation, ideology, and political party affiliation.⁶⁰

Data Analysis

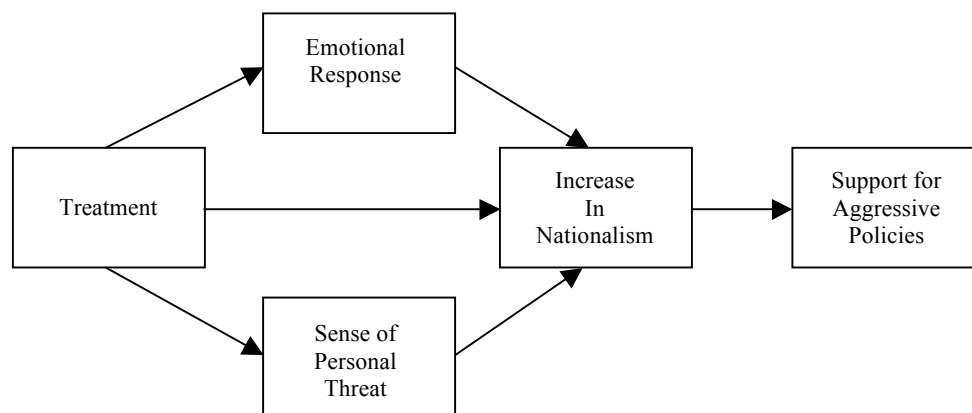
The data will be analyzed with a number of statistical techniques. First, paired samples t-tests will be used to establish if the pre and post-test measures for nationalism and China threat perceptions are statistically different, specifically whether there was an increase in the post-test results. Given the liberal skew of MTurk samples, I am anticipating that the majority of participants will be low identifiers, this allowing for a broad comparison of identity change. Second, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) will be used to establish if there are statistically significant differences in the post-test results for nationalism and policies towards China across the different experimental conditions. An advantage of using ANCOVA is that the procedure can also examine how additional covariates influence the relationship between the treatments and dependent variables. For the purposes of this study, ANCOVA can determine if the experimental effects differ between high and low identifiers. Additionally, post hoc tests will be used to determine the degree to which the experimental conditions differ in their effects on the two dependent variables.

Lastly, path analysis will be used to test the causal chain below for each experimental condition (see Figure 1). Path analysis provides bivariate regression coefficients

⁶⁰ The Indian government does not examine race or ethnicity in their census. While India does measure social group affiliation in the context of Scheduled Caste and Tribe, the Indian government measures it by each state. When combined, there are 645 caste and tribal categories.

for each of causal paths and provides estimates for the direct and indirect effects of the mediating variables. The proposed path model will be tested on low identifiers only. The causal chain for the path model is as follows. First, reading one of the treatments prompts both an increase in viewing China as personal threat and negative emotions such as anger, frustration, and fear (will be positive emotions for India status enhancement condition). Second, feeling personally threatened and experiencing negative emotions prompt an increase in nationalism. Lastly, an increase in nationalism leads to an increase in supporting aggressive policies against China (e.g. preparing for military conflict with China, adopting tougher economic policies against China, and limiting China's global influence).

Figure 1: Model for Low Identifier Increase in Nationalism



POTENTIAL FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The results from the proposed study can provide scholars with a better understanding of how nationalism can be triggered in low identifiers within in an ethnic group or state. Given that low identifiers usually withdraw from their identity group when confronted with an out-group threat, demonstrating the factors that can prompt an increase in nationalist behavior for these

individuals can provide a more complete picture for how the masses can become more nationalist during the early stages of conflict. The results can show a variety of interesting relationships. For example, low identifiers may only respond to certain types of symbolic threats, or they may not respond to symbolic threats at all. The possibility of low identifiers only responding to realistic threats would have important ramifications for the discipline. While IR scholars usually pit rationalist and ideational approaches against one another, conceptualizing it as either or, it may be possible that both mechanisms function in actors and whether one follows a rationalist or ideational logic is based on individual differences in psychology, namely level of group commitment. Additionally, the results from this study can also provide insights for how low identifiers behave in any number of identity contexts such as compliance and non-compliance with various international norms.

Appendix 1: Treatments for American Experiment

US Condition 1 – Economic Threat

Taken from CNN.com

Last week the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission submitted its annual report to Congress. The Commission was created under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2001. The 418-page classified report reveals the increasing threat that China poses to the economic security of the US.

The report notes how China has been manipulating its currency, subsidizing its firms, undermining nascent U.S. firms, erecting trade barriers, stealing intellectual property, and monopolizing critical resources such as steel and rare earths.

The report focuses on how building currency reserves is the primary goal of China's predatory trade policy. Between 2000 and 2014, China's money supply grew by 434%. Its money supply is now ten times greater than the US, despite the fact that China's GDP is only one-third as large. In the past decade, China has accumulated more than \$3.6 trillion in convertible currency reserves, a result of China's escalating balance of trade surpluses with America – China sells more to the US than the US sells to China. This policy has been instrumental in putting many American manufacturers out of business.

The report warns that China's long-term goal is to cripple the US economy, which it plans to achieve by dumping US bonds and dollars on the market. As numerous economists have noted, such a move would immediately devalue the worth of the US dollar, dramatically increase the price of consumer goods in the US, and cause unemployment to rise to levels not seen since the Great Depression.

The report concludes by stating that the China's threat to America's economy needs to be taken seriously by Congress and the President.

US Condition 2 – Security Threat

Taken from CNN.com

Last week the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission submitted its annual report to Congress. The Commission was created under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2001. The 418-page classified report reveals the increasing threat that China poses to the international and domestic security interests of the US.

The report notes that the Chinese navy is seeking to expand its military presence in the Pacific. Last year, it seized the Scarborough Shoal, which lies off the coast of the Philippines. Since September, China has vigorously asserted its new claim to the Senkaku Islands by sending a constant stream of naval vessels and planes to harass Japanese patrol boats there. Additionally, top military leadership in China challenge Japanese claims to the Ryukyu Island chain, which includes Okinawa with its US military bases. Last month, China issued a map that laid out its claims to more than 1.4 million-square-miles of the Pacific, which includes Philippines and thousands of Islands. The report suggests that the map highlights plans for largest attempted land grab since World War II.

On the home front, the report warns that the People's Liberation Army has classified and non-classified US military and government networks "well pinged," and that the Chinese "know where they should attack." On the political side, China can launch cyber-attacks on the White House, State Department, and the Energy Department, among others. On the military side, China has the capabilities to disrupt the Pentagon's unclassified Non-secure Internet Protocol Router Network (NIPRNET), which could slow the response time of the US military during a crisis. Moreover, the report reveals that PLA has capability to attack US banking networks, which could have catastrophic effect on the economy.

China's network on the other hand is "well protected with the world's best filtering system, called the Great Fire Wall," covering all four areas of Internet transactions: political, conflict/security, Internet tools and social. Therefore, the US would have a difficult time counter attacking China's network.

The report concludes by stating that the China's threat to America's economy needs to be taken seriously by Congress and the President.

US Condition 3 – Status Threat

Taken from CNN.com

Last week the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission submitted its annual report to Congress. The Commission was created under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2001. The 418-page classified report reveals the increasing threat that China poses to global position of the US.

The report states how the Chinese have always believed they were superior to the US, and have been waiting to demonstrate this to the world. The Chinese believe that their 2,000-year-old culture is far superior to those of the US and other western countries. In the last decade, Communist Party has set aside its socialist ideology to promote a modern version of the imperial dynasty, where China is the global hegemonic power. Reviving Confucianist thought, China's leaders have positioned themselves as protectors of Chinese unity and promoters of Chinese global dominance. Most Chinese see that mission as sacred.

The report presents data from the International Monetary Fund and Standard and Poor's suggesting that that China is now the largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power and the world's largest manufacturer, surpassing the U.S. in these rankings for the first time. Its market exceeds that of the U.S. in industries such as automobiles, mobile handsets, and personal computers. China's gross domestic product (GDP) has grown from \$1.32 trillion in 2001 to a projected \$5.87 trillion in 2014, representing an increase of more than 400%.

In regards to military power, the report notes that rising Chinese defense capabilities are eroding American supremacy. China's new anti-carrier weapons endanger U.S. force projection capabilities in the Western Pacific; its anti-satellite programs imperil U.S. global surveillance and communication capabilities; its growing operations in cyberspace menace U.S. government operations and the economy of the American homeland alike.

The report concludes by stating that the China's threat to American security needs to be taken seriously by Congress and the President and that if current trends continue, China will be the world's top economic and military power by 2040, with the US being reduced to a second tier power.

US Condition 4 – Core Values Threat

Taken from CNN.com

Last week the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission submitted its annual report to Congress. The Commission was created under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2001. The 418-page classified report reveals the increasing threat that China poses to the core values of the US and the western world.

The report notes that during its rise to power, China has advanced diplomatic, political, and economic values antithetical to those that have been the basis for western society and the international system. For example, China has shown countries from Africa to Asia to South America that robust economic growth can be achieved and sustained under the controlling hand of the state. The message this sends to the world is that economic progress can be achieved with disregard for democratic institutions and basic human rights. This is evidenced by lack of political freedoms, brutal government crackdowns on political dissidents, gross income disparities, sweatshops and slave wages, and female infanticide.

The report details how the government continues to exert its absolute control over politics, and is often looks to eradicate domestic "threats" to stability of the country through excessive use of force and authority. Imprisonment of political opponents and journalists critical of the government has been common. The press is tightly regulated as is

religion. Many religious leaders and congregations have been imprisoned and tortured. In 1979, the government officially noted the "Four Cardinal Principles" (the upholding of socialism, the people's democratic leadership, the leadership of the Communist party, and Maoism) supersede human rights. The Chinese media often mocks the American political system for being weak and inefficient, regularly ridiculing U.S. leaders and depicting America as a nation that is suffering and on life-support.

China's success has spawned national wannabes among regimes -- particularly in Africa -- attracted by the prospect of strong growth and limited democracy. The report points out that the goal of state-run capitalism differs markedly from that of its free-market cousin: "The ultimate motive is not economic (maximizing growth) but political (maximizing the state's power and the leadership's chances of survival)." The spread of Chinese values and practices can have considerable influence in developing and transitional states in that it can hinder the spread of democracy and human rights around the world, thus reversing 100 years of progress in civil liberties and rights.

The report concludes by stating that the spread of Chinese institutions and political practices needs to be taken seriously by Congress and the President.

Appendix 2: Treatments for Indian Experiment

India Condition 1 – Economic Threat

Taken from NDTV.com

Last week the Vivekananda International Foundation submitted a report to Parliament. The 418-page report reveals the increasing threat that China poses to the economic security of India.

The report notes that China's aggressive economic policies have caused it to achieve more influence in Africa than any other country. Currently, India's \$65bn of trade with Africa is dwarfed by China's \$200bn. Chinese companies are active across the continent with big infrastructure projects, including ports, railways and sports stadiums. By contrast, Indian initiatives are led by individual companies looking to expand in sectors such as telecoms, agriculture, the automotive industry and education.

The report states that there is no doubt that natural resources are the core of China's economic interest in Africa. In 2014, China for example was reported to have oil stakes in as many as 11 African countries. China's goal is to monopolize control over Africa's limited resources and reduce India's access to oil, iron, and rare earths. It seeks to conquer African markets and reduce India's presence and influence on the continent.

The report warns that China's long-term goal is to cripple the Indian economy before it becomes a major competitor. As numerous economists in India and the United States have noted, being shut out of African markets can have devastating effects on India's economy such as halting economic growth, widespread unemployment, massive increases in the price of consumer goods, and a reduction of foreign investment in India. Furthermore, the report notes that China hopes to make India more reliant on it like the US, which it has already begun to do by lending more than \$5bn to Indian companies.

The report concludes by stating that Chinese assertiveness requires that India should review the entire range of its policies on China.

India Condition 2 – Military Threat

Taken from NDTV.com

Last week the Vivekananda International Foundation submitted a report to Parliament. The 418-page report reveals that India will rival China as a great power in the coming decades.

The report notes that the Chinese navy is seeking to expand its military presence in Asia and the Pacific. Last year, it seized the Scarborough Shoal, which lies off the coast of the Philippines. Since September, China has vigorously asserted its new claim to the Senkaku Islands by sending a constant stream of naval vessels and planes to harass Japanese patrol boats there. Last month, China issued a map that laid out its claims to more than 1.4 million-square-miles of the Pacific, which includes Philippines and thousands of Islands. The report suggests that the map highlights plans for largest attempted land grab since World War II.

The report also notes that China seeks to contain India by enhancing Pakistan's nuclear weapons and missile capabilities. Apart from equipping Pakistan with weapons systems ranging from fighter aircraft to frigates, China also provides massive economic assistance for Kashmir.

On the home front, Chinese troops intruded nearly 12 miles into Indian territory in May, withdrawing only after India agreed to withdraw its own troops from the area. The high-altitude border dispute, which has been simmering since the 1962, involves territory the size of Greece with a population of more than 1 million. The report states that China has devised a novel methodology for intruding into Indian territory by refusing to define where the "Line of Actual Control" (LAC) lies on its borders with India. China has, in recent years, also claimed that the whole of Arunachal Pradesh is a part of "South Tibet".

The report also warns that the People's Liberation Army has classified and non-classified Indian military and government networks "well pinged," and that the Chinese "know where they should attack." China has the capabilities to disrupt the Ministry of Defense's complex internet network, which could slow the response time of the Indian military during a crisis. Moreover, the report reveals that PLA has capability to attack Indian banking networks, which could have catastrophic effect on the economy.

The report concludes by stating that Chinese assertiveness requires that India should review the entire range of its policies on China.

India Condition 3 – Status Enhancement

Taken from NDTV.com

Last week the Vivekananda International Foundation submitted a report to Parliament. The 418-page report reveals that China is worried about India emerging as a challenger to Chinese dominance in the region, which is very likely if India remains on its current path of economic and military development.

The report notes that China's GDP growth rate is slowing much more than the fraudulent figures put out by the government and that in the coming years, China will find it increasingly difficult to simultaneously maintain manufacturing stability and foreign investment inflows. India, on the other hand, has a number of advantages over China. First, while China's economy will continue to be driven the manufacturing of cheap consumer goods, India's economy will soon be driven by software and information technology. India is in the process of an industrial technological revolution, and at the forefront is the aerospace industry.

Having the world's second largest population, India has an increasing number of workers (expected to double to just under 1 billion by 2025) available at wages competitive to those of China and alluring domestic middle class – coincidentally the same size as China's is today, at 250 million. India's middle class is growing faster than China's and has more purchasing power. International brands are now flocking to India to sell to that middle class. When India's infrastructure gap with China starts to close – and there clear signs this is happening – it will kick start India's ascension to both the world's manufacturing hub and its largest consumer market.

Militarily, the report notes that in the coming years, India will also rival China. Although 70 per cent of India's military hardware is imported, it is qualitatively better than China's, coming from more developed countries such as the US and Great Britain. The majority of Chinese weapons systems are in various stages of decay. Only 450 of China's 7,580 tanks are anywhere near modern. Likewise, only 502 of China's 1,321 strong air force are deemed capable — the rest date to refurbished Soviet planes from the 1970s. Only half of China's submarines have been built within the past twenty years.

India on the hand, has launched its own stealth frigate and a nuclear submarine modelled on a Russian design. India has tested a range of longer-distance missiles, including a supersonic cruise missile called the Brahmos, and boasts a formidable space program, which has made India one of four countries to successfully launch a space mission to Mars. In terms of manpower, in the coming years the number of India's troops will match those of China.

The report concludes by noting that if the Indian government continues with its reforms it can match China's military and economic power by 2040.

India Condition 4 – Core Values Threat

Taken from NDTV.com

Last week the Vivekananda International Foundation submitted a report to Parliament. The 418-page report reveals the increasing threat that China poses to the core values of India. The Chinese media often mocks the Indian political system for being weak and inefficient, regularly ridiculing Indian leaders and depicting India as a nation that is suffering and on life-support.

The report notes that during its rise to power, China has advanced diplomatic, political, and economic values antithetical to those that have been the basis for Indian and the international system. For example, China has shown countries from Africa to Asia to South America that robust economic growth can be achieved and sustained under the controlling hand of the state. The message this sends to the world is that economic progress can be achieved with disregard for democratic institutions and basic human rights. This is evidenced by lack of political freedoms, brutal government crackdowns on political dissidents, gross income disparities, slave wages, and female infanticide.

The report details how the government continues to exert its absolute control over politics, and is often looks to eradicate domestic “threats” to stability of the country through excessive use of force and authority. Imprisonment of political opponents and journalists critical of the government has been common. The press is tightly regulated as is religion. Many Buddhist and Muslim religious have been imprisoned and tortured. In 1979, the government officially noted the “Four Cardinal Principles” (the upholding of socialism, the people’s democratic leadership, the leadership of the Communist party, and Maoism) supersede human rights.

China’s success has spawned national wannabes among regimes -- particularly in Africa -- attracted by the prospect of strong growth and limited democracy. The report points out that the goal of state-run capitalism differs markedly from that of its free-market cousin: “The ultimate motive is not economic (maximizing growth) but political (maximizing the state's power and the leadership's chances of survival).” The spread of Chinese values and practices can have considerable influence in developing and transitional states in that it can hinder the spread of democracy and human rights around the world, thus reversing 100 years of progress in civil liberties and rights.

The report concludes by stating that the spread of Chinese institutions and political practices needs to be taken seriously by Congress and the President.

Appendix 3: Pre-test Survey

- 1) What is your sex?
 1. Male
 2. Female
- 2) What is your age?
- 3) Which of the following best describes your racial background (*US Only*)?
 1. White
 2. Black
 3. Hispanic
 4. Native America or Pacific Islander
 5. Asian
 6. Other
- 4) Which of the following best describes your background (*US only*)?
 1. Hispanic
 2. Non-Hispanic
- 5) What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

US response options

1. Less than high school
2. High school graduate
3. Vocational or technical training
4. Undergraduate degree
5. Post graduate degree

India response options

1. Below primary
2. Primary
3. Middle
4. Secondary
5. Senior Secondary
6. Non-technical diploma or certificate
7. Graduate
8. Post Graduate

- 6) Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation?

US response options

1. Mainline Protestant (e.g. Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist)
2. Evangelical Protestant (e.g. Pentecostal, Baptist, Church of Christ, Non-denominational)
3. Catholic
4. Mormon
5. Jewish
6. Muslim
7. Buddhist

8. Hindu
9. Agnostic
10. Atheist
11. Other

India response options

1. Hindu
2. Muslim
3. Christian
4. Jain
5. Buddhist
6. Sikh
7. Parsi
8. Other

7) Using the scale below, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

- A. Whenever science and religion conflict, religion is always right.
- B. The only acceptable religion is my religion.
- C. All religions should be taught in our public schools.
- D. People who belong to different religions are probably just as moral as those who belong to mine.

8) On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means “no threat” and 10 means “a severe threat,” where would you place the following states?

- A. Afghanistan _____
- B. China _____
- C. France _____
- D. Great Britain _____
- E. India _____ (This option will be United States in Indian version)
- F. Iran _____
- G. North Korea _____
- H. Pakistan _____
- I. Russia _____

9) Using the scale below, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

Patriotism

- A. I am proud to be an American (*Indian*).
- B. I am emotionally attached to America (*Indian*) and emotionally affected by its actions.

- C. Although at times I may not agree with the government, my commitment to the US (*India*) always remains strong.
- D. The fact I am an American (*Indian*) is an important part of my identity and in general, I have very little respect for the American (*Indian*) people.

Nationalism

- E. The United States (*India*) is a better country than most other countries.
- F. The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like the United States (*India*).
- G. I would rather be a citizen of the United States (*India*) than of any other country in the world.
- H. It is impossible for people who do not share American (*Indian*) customs and traditions to become fully American (*Indian*).
- I. People should support their country even if the country is in the wrong.
- J. The United States (*India*) should follow its own interests, even if this leads to conflicts with other nations.

10) Which of the following best describes your political party affiliation?

US response options

- 1. Republican
- 2. Democrat
- 3. Independent
- 4. Something Else

India response options

- 1. Bharatiya Janata Party
- 2. Bahujan Samaj Party
- 3. Communist Party of India
- 4. Communist Party of India (Marxist)
- 5. Indian National Congress
- 6. Nationalist Congress Party

11) Where would you place yourself on the scale below?

- 1. Extremely liberal
- 2. Liberal
- 3. Slightly liberal
- 4. Moderate
- 5. Slightly conservative
- 6. Conservative
- 7. Extremely conservative

Appendix 4: Post-test survey

- 12) This scale consists of a number of words and phrases that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space for each word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way at the present moment.

1. Very slightly or not at all
2. A little
3. Moderately
4. Quite a bit
5. Extremely

- A. Frustrated
- B. Cheerful
- C. Sad
- D. Calm
- E. Distressed
- F. Joyful
- G. Angry
- H. Proud
- I. Disgusted
- J. Strong
- K. Hostile
- L. Inspired
- M. Afraid

- 13) On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means “no threat” and 10 means “a severe threat,” where would you place the following states?

- A. Afghanistan _____
- B. China _____
- C. France _____
- D. Great Britain _____
- E. India _____ (This option will be United States in Indian version)
- F. Iran _____
- G. North Korea _____
- H. Pakistan _____
- I. Russia _____

- 14) How concerned are you personally about you yourself or a family member being negatively impacted by China’s policies towards the United States (India)?

1. Not at all concerned
2. Slightly concerned
3. Moderately concerned
4. Very concerned
5. Extremely concerned

- 15) Using the scale below, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree

5. Strongly agree

- A. China poses a serious threat to the United States' (*India's*) economy.
- B. China poses a serious security threat to the United States (*India*).
- C. The United States (*India*) should build a strong relationship with China.
- D. The United States (*India*) should be tough with China on trade and economic issues.
- E. The United States (*India*) should promote human rights in China.
- F. The United States (*India*) should prepare for a military conflict with China.

16) Using the scale below, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 1. Strongly disagree
- 2. Disagree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Agree
- 5. Strongly agree

Patriotism

- A. I am proud to be an American (*Indian*).
- B. I am emotionally attached to America (*Indian*) and emotionally affected by its actions.
- C. Although at times I may not agree with the government, my commitment to the US (*India*) always remains strong.
- D. The fact I am an American (*Indian*) is an important part of my identity and in general, I have very little respect for the American (*Indian*) people.

Nationalism

- E. The United States (*India*) is a better country than most other countries.
- F. The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like the United States (*India*).
- G. I would rather be a citizen of the United States (*India*) than of any other country in the world.
- H. It is impossible for people who do not share American (*Indian*) customs and traditions to become fully American (*Indian*).
- I. People should support their country even if the country is in the wrong.
- J. The United States (*India*) should follow its own interests, even if this leads to conflicts with other nations.

Appendix 5 – Distraction Measure

Please indicate your preference in the use of hands for each of the following activities or objects by placing a check in the appropriate column.

	Always Left	Usually Left	No Preference	Usually Right	Always Right
Writing					
Drawing					
Spoon					
Opening Jars					
Toothbrush					
Throwing					
Comb Hair					
Scissors					
Knife (without fork)					
Striking a Match					

Appendix 6: Informed Consent

The purpose of this research project is to examine individuals' opinions about China. This research project is being conducted by Dr. Michael C. Grillo at Schreiner University.

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this research study, you may withdraw at any time. Participants who complete the study will be compensated \$0.50 through Amazon Mechanical Turk.

The research study will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The study will include the following components.

1. Completing a short a survey that will elicit demographic information (e.g. age, gender, race/ethnicity) and information about religious and political views
2. Reading a short news story about China
3. Completing another short survey that will ask your opinions about the article.

Your responses will be confidential and we will not collect identifying information such as your name, email address or IP address.

We will take measures to keep your information confidential. All data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. To help protect your confidentiality, the surveys will not contain information that will personally identify you. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only and may be shared with representatives at Schreiner University or Marist College.

If you have any questions about the research study, please feel free to contact Dr. Michael Grillo (phone: 830-792-7461, e-mail: mcgrillo@schreiner.edu).

This research has been reviewed according to Schreiner University's IRB procedures for research involving human subjects. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Schreiner University's Institutional Review board at 830-792-7487.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the 'agree' button below indicates that:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.