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Anti-Asian Racism and the Racial Politics of U.S.-China Great Power Rivalry

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

by

Daegyeong Kim

Committee in charge:

Professor David A. Lake, Chair
Professor Emily Hafner-Burton, Co-Chair
Professor Stephan Haggard
Professor Zoltan Hajnal
Professor Megumi Naoi
Professor Margaret E. Roberts

2022

The Dissertation of Daegyeong Kim is approved, and it is acceptable
in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically.

University of California San Diego

2022

DEDICATION

To Sohee

EPIGRAPH

The awakening of the yellow races is certain…Shall the awakening of these sleepy millions be in accordance with, and aided by, the great ideals of white civilization, or in spite of them and against them? This is the problem of the Color Line. Force and Fear have hitherto marked the white attitude toward darker races; shall this continue, or be replaced by Freedom and Friendship?

W.E.B. Du Bois, 1906

Although the world's a big place, we Chinese crouch in terror,
Fearing to be devoured by demonic men.
Our Celestial Envoy and the Yellow Race
Have become a laughingstock to all nations of the world...

For even if we could pour out all the four seas' waters,
We will never wash clean our national disgrace…

When, when will the glories of ancient China revive?

Huang Zunxian, 1880

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAR   Asian American resentment

ANES   American National Election Studies

CES   Cooperative Election Study

CCP   Chinese Communist Party

IR   International Relations

MAR   Muslim American resentment

MMS   Model minority stereotype

PRC   People's Republic of China

RRS   Racial resentment scale

RWA   Right wing authoritarianism

SCS   South China Sea

SDO   Social dominance orientation

WMP   Wesleyan Media Project

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The origin of this dissertation goes back to the summer of 2008, when I arrived in a small rural town of the United States as a foreign student. Facing racist encounters on the streets – from microaggressions to explicit discrimination, I was immediately forced to realize that I was not just a Korean anymore. Now I was an Asian, a "Chinaman," attached to a baggage of stereotypes and stigmas. My scholarly journey at Cornell and later at UCSD focused on finding answers to such a transformative experience: What does it mean to be an Asian in today's America? What does the "rise of China" imply for the global order that, at least to me, had already looked deeply racialized? More than ten years later, I started writing my dissertation in the middle of surging anti-Asian violence during the pandemic. Focused on the scientific inquiry of anti-Asian racism and its implications for U.S.-China relations, this dissertation is, first and foremost, dedicated to all those who lost their lives and loved ones during this pandemic as well as those who have been brave enough to stand up for racial justice and harmony.

This work would not have been possible without the support and guidance of my dissertation committee. To my co-chairs, David Lake and Emilie Hafner-Burton, thank you both for your unwavering support and confidence in me – ever since the early days of my graduate training, amidst the distress and fear at the height of the pandemic, and during my venture into the daunting academic job market. "Your dissertation should come down to one sentence that summarizes your worldview," was but one of David's numerous inspiring words that guided me, pushed me, and reassured me throughout the course of writing this dissertation. With his profound theoretical insights, David taught me how to articulate my views with utmost

clarity and rigor. With her limitless energy and patience, Emilie always pointed me in the right direction, helping me frame my micro-level survey research with big picture questions. Whenever I was in doubt, Emilie made sure I understand that she always had my back and reminded me of the importance and potential of my research. Without her unconditional support, I would not have made it through the challenges of the past six years.

I am also deeply thankful to Steph Haggard, Zoli Hajnal, Megumi Naoi, and Molly Roberts for their invaluable support as dissertation advisors. I have been privileged to work with and learn from Steph, who convinced me of what I truly hope to achieve as a scholar: To produce big and important ideas and connect them with the real world. Having Zoli as my advisor marked a turning point in my dissertation research. With his expertise and deep insights, he helped me craft my research in a way that speaks to cutting-edge scholarship on American race politics. Megumi, through countless extra office hours and emails, was always patient with my unpolished ideas and offered me incisive comments and advice. Molly taught me how to answer big questions with new research skills and offered me the most practical and hands-on advice – always with her warm smile.

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Chapter 2, in part, has been submitted for publication of the material as it may appear in D.G. Kim and Enze Han. "Yellow Peril or Model Minority? Janus-Faced Anti-Asian Racism

in the United States." The dissertation author was the primary researcher and author of this paper.

Chapter 3, in part, is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material. D.G. Kim. "Anti-Asian Racial Resentment and the Racialization of American Public Opinion on China." The dissertation author was the primary researcher and author of this material.

Chapter 4, in part, is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material. D.G. Kim. "Anti-Asian Racism and Chinese Public Support for Hawkish Foreign Policies." The dissertation author was the primary researcher and author of this material.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Anti-Asian Racism and the Racial Politics of U.S.-China Great Power Rivalry

by

Daegyeong Kim

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California San Diego, 2022

Professor David A. Lake, Chair
Professor Emily Hafner-Burton, Co-Chair

The recent dramatic surge in anti-Asian racial violence has exposed two under-examined, yet increasingly salient, dimensions of contemporary American politics. First, it demonstrates the persistence of old-fashioned racism against Asian Americans who have long been marginalized as "perpetual foreigners" in American society. Second, the concurrent rise of anti-*Asian* and anti-*China* sentiments amidst U.S.-China conflicts over the pandemic and other geopolitical disputes suggests that racial considerations may still play an important role

in the formation and expression of mass foreign policy attitudes toward China – an Asian power that has historically been viewed through an explicitly racial lens. This three-paper dissertation focuses on anti-Asian racism in today's American society and examines its far-reaching effects on the formation of foreign policy preferences among American and Chinese publics. The first paper introduces the theories of anti-Asian racism and proposes new measures of racialized views toward the minority group. Utilizing two original national surveys, I find that these new measures – the Asian American resentment (AAR) and model minority stereotype (MMS) scales – perform better than previous measures of racial attitudes in capturing the key constructs of Asian American racial tropes. The second paper expands the scope of inquiry by applying the new measures to predicting American foreign policy preferences toward China. Based on findings from two studies and multiple national surveys, I find that racialized views toward Asians significantly predict American mass support for hawkish China policies, sometimes even more so than conventional predictors of foreign policy preferences such as political ideology and party identification. The third paper turns the focus to the impact of anti-Asian racism on political discourses and foreign policy opinion in China. Through quantitative media analyses and a national survey experiment, I find that Chinese elites and masses have paid a great deal of attention to domestic racial violence in America and reacted with greater support for foreign policy aggression. By focusing on the foreign policy implications of domestic anti-Asian racism, the papers together highlight race and racism as important, yet largely overlooked, factors of international politics in general and contemporary U.S.-China relations in particular.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

History, unfortunately, does repeat itself. About 40 years after the tragic death of Vincent Chin amidst surging anti-Asian violence in the 1980s (McClain 2021), we are witnessing, yet again, the emergence of the "yellow peril syndrome" – the racialized fear toward a foreign Asian competitor, such as Japan in the past and China for today (Tchen and Yeats 2014; Chang 2015). Against the backdrop of China's rise as a hegemonic challenger to the United States, only exacerbated by the latest conflict over the COVID-19 pandemic, anti-Asian racism has again been brought to the forefront of American racial politics and foreign policy discourses (Jeung and Lee 2021).

The recent dramatic rise in anti-Asian hate crimes has sparked debates on issues of domestic racial justice and the racialized experiences of Asians in the United States (Kim and Kesari 2021; Reny and Barreto 2022). Political scientists, however, have paid scant attention to investigating how anti-Asian racism potentially affects American relations with China today. On the one hand, scholars of American race and ethnic politics have focused primarily on examining racial animus against African Americans, falling short of developing shared empirical tools for the study of anti-Asian racism. IR scholars, on the other hand, have long sidestepped the inquiry of race and racism in international politics – a widespread practice known as the 'norm against noticing' in IR (Vitalis 2000; also see Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022). As a result, scholars have yet to conduct systematic inquires on the intersection of race, racism, and contemporary U.S.-China relations.

To fill this gap, this three-paper dissertation examines anti-Asian racism in American society and its implications for Sino-American great power rivalry, with a focus on American and

Chinese public opinion. Based on evidence from a series of cross-national public opinion surveys and quantitative media analyses, I empirically demonstrate the continued prevalence of racialized views toward Asians in American society and their far-reaching influences on the development of hawkish foreign policy discourses and mass preferences in both countries across the Pacific.

In the first paper "Measuring Anti-Asian Racism," I introduce the theories of anti-Asian racism and propose new measures of racialized views toward the minority group in the United States. In the paper, I focus on two prominent but seemingly contradictory symbols of how Asians are racialized in American society: "yellow peril" and "model minority." By reviewing the history and previous theories of the two racial tropes, I show that contemporary racial attitudes toward Asians are deeply rooted in the development of American racial hierarchy that remains salient to this date. I then utilize two new quantitative measures -- the Asian American resentment (AAR) and model minority stereotype (MMS) scales – to answer the following questions: What is the overall structure of racialized views toward Asians in America today? Who is more likely to hold resentful sentiments toward Asian Americans and/or perceive the group as a model minority? Finally, what effects do these racial tropes have on Americans' support for race-related public policies?

With two original national surveys, I first show that the proposed measures are internally consistent and perform better than previous measures of racial attitudes in capturing the key constructs of Asian American racial tropes. With these valid measures, I find that while most Americans uncritically embrace the model minority image of Asian Americans, a significant portion of the public still views them in a negative light, perceiving them as overly competitive and un-American. By probing the correlates of AAR and MMS, I then find that more conservative outlooks on general inter-group relations such as social dominance orientation and ethnocentrism

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strongly predict higher levels of the two racialized views. Finally, I show that both AAR and MMS have distinct and strong effects on support for public policies that either directly or indirectly affect the welfare of Asian Americans.

In the second paper, "Anti-Asian Racism and American Foreign Policy Public Opinion," I expand my scope of inquiry by applying the new measures to assessing the effects of racialized views toward Asians on Americans' foreign policy preferences vis-à-vis China. In the paper, I lay the theoretical groundwork to explain the racialization of American opinion on China, integrating diverse insights from emerging IR scholarship on race and international hierarchy. In world politics, many dominant states have succeeded in establishing an unequal global order (Lake 2010; Zarakol 2017) and have occasionally viewed subordinate states as racially inferior yet potentially dangerous (Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022). I posit that such racialized views are most strongly activated within dominant states under the condition of power shifts – in the face of rising great power competitors. Applied to contemporary U.S.-China relations, I argue that China's rise as a hegemonic challenger evokes deep-seated racial resentment and racialized views toward Asians in the United States which, in turn, work to exacerbate mass threat perception and hawkish sentiments against the Asian great power.

To empirically assess the effects of racial attitudes on China policy preferences among the American public, I rely on findings from two separate studies with multiple national surveys. In Study 1, I find that resentful feelings toward Asians, as measured by AAR, significantly predict American mass support for hawkish China policies, sometimes even more so than conventional predictors of foreign policy preferences such as political ideology and party identification. I also find that the racial attitude effects are equally or more pronounced among liberals and racial minorities, suggesting that a racialized fear of China could effectively garner public support for

hawkish China policies across partisan and racial lines. In Study 2, I find that the perception of Asians as a model minority, as measured by MMS, also has its own distinct effects on foreign policy preferences: Reflecting the ostensibly positive view of Asian people, it is associated with greater mass support for *friendly* Asian countries. Interestingly, when it comes to countries posing economic or military threats such as China, the racialized view significantly predicts *higher* levels of support for hawkish foreign policies in the region. Taken together, the findings suggest that individual-level racial attitudes exert substantial effects on the formulation and expression of American public opinion on China today.

In the third paper, "Anti-Asian Racism and Chinese Foreign Policy Public Opinion," I turn my focus to the impact of anti-Asian racism on political discourses and foreign policy opinion in China. Historically, exposure to anti-Asian racism has served as a major catalyst in the formation of nationalist and hawkish sentiments among both Chinese elites and masses. In the paper, I argue that growing anti-Asian racial violence today directly affects the formation of hawkish foreign policy opinion in China by strengthening anti-white sentiment, Asian identity, and a sense of victimhood among the Chinese public – some of the key psychological components of modern Chinese nationalism. I also argue that the Chinese state media plays a key role in the process by propagating politicizing rhetoric and discourses on the issue.

To test my arguments, I investigate the way China's official newspapers discuss anti-Asian racism in America and how such top-down discourses shape Chinese mass political attitudes and foreign policy preferences. Analyzing the Chinese state media coverage of anti-Asian racial violence, I first find that official narratives in China frame the issue as the manifestation of racially motivated American foreign policy and problems with American democracy. By conducting a nationwide survey experiment in China, I then empirically assess the impact of such top-down

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political rhetoric on public support for China's foreign policy aggression. I find that the narratives on anti-Asian racism significantly increase the levels of anti-White sentiment, Asian racial identity, and the sense of victimhood among the Chinese masses, which in turn significantly mediate the effects of treatment messages on increased support for hawkish Chinese foreign policy.

By focusing on the foreign policy implications of domestic anti-Asian racism, the papers together highlight race and racism as important, yet largely overlooked, factors of global politics in general and contemporary U.S.-China relations in particular. My dissertation thus contributes to emerging scholarship on race and racism in international politics that has only begun to address the longstanding elision of race in IR (Bhambra et al. 2020; Shilliam 2020a; Shilliam 2020b; Zvobgo and Loken 2020; Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022). By bringing together interdisciplinary insights and quantitative research methods, my work will lay the groundwork for future studies on anti-Asian racism and American relations with China – two of the most salient and consequential political issues we face today.

CHAPTER 2 MEASURING ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

2.1 Introduction

With the fast-growing Hispanic, Asian, and other racial and ethnic minority populations, the United States is effectively transitioning to a so-called "majority-minority" nation (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). Accordingly, anti-immigrant and anti-minority sentiments, exacerbated by deepening economic grievances and political polarization, have become a central feature of American politics. While recent scholarship has started to highlight the political consequences of anti-immigrant and anti-Hispanic sentiments (see e.g., Hajnal and Rivera 2014), political scientists have paid relatively little attention to anti-Asian racism, another key aspect of American race relations today. The recent rise of anti-China political rhetoric, coupled with the politicization of the COVID-19 pandemic, has resulted in an exponential growth in the number of hate crimes against Asians at home. In 2020, amidst the global pandemic with its roots in China, major American cities witnessed a 149 percent increase in hate crimes and violence against people of Asian descent (Russell 2020; Russell and Lee 2021). Subtler forms of anti-Asian hate, ranging from verbal threats to workplace discrimination, have also become pervasive: According to Stop AAPI Hate, over 10,000 anti-Asian hate incidents have been reported across the country between March 2020 and December 2021 (Strauss 2022).

Such explicit displays of anti-Asian racism should have come as a shock to many Americans who hold that Asian Americans, often referred to as a "model minority," would be relatively free from racial violence and discrimination. Despite the seemingly positive model minority stereotypes, however, Asian Americans have long been subjected to socio-political exclusion, recurring hate crimes, and more fundamentally, deep-seated racial animus. As scholars of Asian American politics have noted, while Asians have been valorized as a "model minority,"

they have simultaneously been ostracized in American society as "perpetual foreigners" (Kim 1999, 107; see also Wu 2002). During periods of conflicts with foreign Asian powers, Asian Americans have repeatedly been questioned for their loyalty to the nation and, as we witness today, often targeted for racialized violence. This image of Asian Americans as suspicious outsiders becomes even more threatening, ironically, due to their perceived competence – the very idea that makes the group a "model minority" in the first place. Historically, the presumed economic success and relative superiority of Asian Americans have in fact been a major source of anti-Asian racial fear, giving rise, for example, to the Chinese Exclusion Act in the late 19th century. In short, while Asian Americans continue to be racialized as a "model minority," the so-called "yellow peril" discourse persists as a prominent racial trope that shapes American attitudes towards the minority group to this date (Tchen and Yeats 2014).

Against the backdrop of deepening Sino-American tensions, Asian Americans are yet again being victimized by racialized violence, encountering such deep-rooted stereotypes and hatred in their everyday lives. Despite the increasing visibility of racial resentment against this fastest-growing minority population in America (Budiman and Ruiz 2021), political scientists have yet to produce a systematic and empirical assessment of contemporary racial attitudes toward Asian Americans. Established studies on racial resentment, on the one hand, have exclusively focused on White racial attitudes toward African Americans (See e.g., Kinder and Sanders 1996; Carmines, Sniderman, and Easter 2011). On the other hand, more recent studies have begun to address the call for going "beyond Black and White" (Kim 1999; Stephens-Dougan 2021) by examining resentment against Muslim (Lajevardi 2020), Hispanic (Ramirez and Peterson 2020; Sergio and Ocampo 2020), and Native (Foxworth and Boulding 2022) Americans, but have fallen short of fully investigating anti-*Asian* racial resentment. As a result, the race scholarship still lacks shared

measures of racial attitudes toward Asian Americans, a prerequisite for answering the following urgent questions, among others: How widespread and strong are negative sentiments against Asian Americans? Do such resentful feelings co-exist with the perception of Asian Americans as a "model minority"? How do racialized views of Asian Americans affect the political attitudes and policy preferences of the American public?

As a step toward filling this scholarly gap, in this chapter, I develop and test two quantitative measures of contemporary racial attitudes towards Asian Americans: The Asian American resentment (AAR) and the model minority stereotype (MMS) scales. Using two rounds of national surveys, I first demonstrate the validity of these novel measures and utilize them to examine the structure of racialized views toward Asian Americans. I find that while most Americans embrace the model minority image of Asian Americans, a significant portion of the public still views them in a negative light, perceiving them as overly competitive and un-American. I also answer the question of who feels more resentful toward Asian Americans and who perceives them as a "model minority," by probing the demographic and dispositional correlates of the two measures. I then show that the two racial tropes, as measured by AAR and MMS, have distinct effects on mass support for public policies that affect the Asian American community. Taken together, this chapter provides robust empirical tools to study the complex and multi-faceted mass racial attitudes toward Asians and their far-reaching political implications in an increasingly diverse and polarized American society.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows. I begin by situating the racialization of Asian Americans within the historical context of American racial politics. In so doing, I also review how the existing literature has analyzed the political logic and structure of racialized views toward Asian Americans. I then introduce the original AAR and MMS scales and present empirical

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findings with data from two national surveys. I conclude by discussing the limitations of the study and avenues for future research.

2.2 Racialized Views Towards Asian Americans: Yellow Peril vs. Model Minority

The "yellow peril" discourse – one of the most prominent racial tropes that shape American perceptions of Asians to this date – has a long history. It was most virulent in Europe and America in the mid-19th century, when expanding Western imperial powers came into intense encounters with East Asia, particularly Japan and China (Frayling 2014; Tchen and Yeats 2013). The German Kaiser Wilhelm II (who ruled from 1888-1918) played an important role in the initial construction of the yellow peril discourse: Calling for unified European efforts to invade China, he propagated the idea that Europe might one day fall into the hands of die "Gelbe Gefahr" (the "Yellow Peril"), ceding its global hegemony to the Asiatic people (Lyman 2000). Such racialized views gained even greater currency in Western countries with the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 – a historic event portrayed as the first time a "Yellow" nation defeated a "white" one (Suzuki 2009). The rise of the Japanese empire further consolidated this yellow peril fear, which materialized into brutal and inhumane tactics among fighting nations during the Pacific War (Dower 1987) and the mass internment of Japanese Americans in the United States (Finkelman 2014).

Where the Chinese are concerned, the yellow peril trope was deeply tied to their migration history and the racial threat perceived by Anglo-European settler societies (Ngai 2021). The ceding of Hong Kong to Britain in 1842 created an opportunity for Chinese labor to be exported to gold mines in California and Australia (McKeown 2010). The subsequent influx of Chinese immigrants to the white settler societies, however, provoked intense racialized competition

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between Chinese and white laborers during the Gold Rush, culminating in the legislation of anti-Chinese immigration laws in both places (McKeown 2004). Willing to work for low wages and driven for economic success, Chinese immigrants were resented as "unbeatable competitors" who pose grave economic threats to white Americans (Smith 1993). Their perceived cultural differences exacerbated the threat perception: the Chinese were viewed as "uncivilized rice-eating men" who had "neither the rights nor responsibilities of masculine 'beef-eating' [White] men" (Lake and Reynolds 2008, 27). Throughout this period, the typical portrayal of "Chinamen" in the popular image of Fu Manchu was a "cunning" and "sinister" entity, the embodiment of the yellow peril (Mayer 2013). This racialized fear of Asians continued to shape American immigration policy through the 1924 Immigration Act, which further excluded all people of Asian origin from migrating to the United States (Smith 1993).

This deep-rooted yellow peril trope continues to frame contemporary mass racial sentiments toward Asian Americans. Although less explicit and at times dormant, the racialized fear of Asians repeatedly became more prominent during times of foreign policy crisis involving East Asia in the post-World War II period. The Korean and Vietnam Wars in the 1950s and 60s and the rise of Japan as an economic threat in the 1980s were all accompanied by surging domestic racism and violence against Asians in the United States (Moeller 1996; Morris 2011).

At the same time, another powerful discourse that portrayed Asian Americans as a "model minority" emerged in the early years of the Cold War. Coined by the Berkeley sociologist Williams Pettersen in his 1966 New York Times article "Success Story, Japanese-American Style" (Pettersen 1966), the term "model minority" characterized Asian Americans as "well-assimilated, upwardly mobile, politically non-threatening, and definitely not black" (Wu 2013, 2). By overgeneralizing Asian American economic success, this model minority trope depicted Asian

Americans as a homogeneous group distinct from other racial minorities – especially African Americans who, according to the story, have yet to "work their way up" and continue causing troubles in society.[1] As Lee (2007) points out, this narrative served several political purposes. Domestically, it was conveniently used to downplay systemic and institutional racism in American society – a political counter-discourse against the civil rights movement in the 60s. Internationally, the narrative was employed as a diplomatic tool for the ideological competition with the Soviet Union, promoting the United States as "a liberal democratic state where people of color could enjoy equal rights and upward mobility" (Lee 2007, 469).

As Junn (2007) aptly shows, post-war immigration policy further contributed to strengthening the model minority image of Asian Americans: by giving preferential treatment to skilled immigrants, the United States admitted a disproportionately large number of well-educated and high-income Asian immigrants. Against this multifaceted socio-political background, Asian Americans thus suddenly became the success story of the "American dream" (Lew 2010), having outpaced others in school performance and in the labor force. Their perceived work ethic, intelligence, and "good behavior" were touted as reasons why this population did not end up as "criminals in slums" (Wu 2013, 243).

Notwithstanding such seemingly positive model minority stereotypes, the yellow peril trope has persisted, and Asian Americans continue to be viewed with a mixture of admiration, envy, and resentment (Fiske et al. 2002). Claire Jean Kim (1999) analyzes this distinct multi-dimensional racialization of Asian Americans, arguing that the minority group is racially

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[1] The idea of African Americans "not trying hard enough" to overcome prejudice and achieve economic success constitutes the core dimension of contemporary anti-Black racial resentment, as captured by the standard measure of racial resentment in the literature (see e.g., Kinder and Sanders (1996)).

triangulated between white and black Americans within the hierarchical racial order. On the one hand, Asian Americans are valorized as a "model minority" vis-à-vis African Americans, to the effect of creating a racial wedge between the two subordinate groups while denying the problems of systemic racism. By being ostracized as "perpetual foreigners," on the other hand, Asian Americans are simultaneously marginalized as outsiders and a latent threat to "mainstream" American society (Kim 1999; see also Xu and Lee 2013). Such a complex racialization of Asian Americans, Kim (1999) concludes, serves to "reinforce white racial power, insulating it from minority encroachment and challenge" (12). Originated from the long and contested history of American racial hierarchy that remains salient today, the two seemingly contradictory yet closely inter-connected racial tropes continue to shape mass racialized views of Asian Americans.

2.3 Measuring Racial Attitudes toward Asian Americans

To empirically investigate the configuration and political effects of racialized views toward Asian Americans, we need a valid measure that accurately taps into the key dimensions of the two racial tropes discussed above. Besides the most widely utilized symbolic racism or racial resentment scale (Kinder and Sears 1981; Kinder and Sanders 1996), which specifically captures anti-Black racial animus, scholars have often relied on two conventional measures of attitudes toward racial minorities in the United States: racial stereotypes and feeling thermometer scales (Sides and Gross 2013; Hajnal and Rivera 2014). As Lajevardi and Abrajano (2019) point out, however, these scales fall short of fully reflecting the specific contexts and contents of racialized sentiments toward racial and ethnic minorities other than African Americans in the United States. Most notably, the stereotype measures were originally developed to assess the racialized perception of African Americans as "lazy," "unintelligent," and "violent." Other existing scales

that have been proposed as alternatives to the racial resentment scale, such as the DeSante and Smith (2020) "FIRE" battery, are designed to cover more comprehensive aspects of mass racial attitudes but are still ill-equipped to capture the distinct racialization of specific minority groups.

More recently, against the backdrop of growing racial diversity and calls for going beyond the Black-White binary in the race scholarship (Jardina 2019; Stephens-Dougan 2021), researchers have begun to propose new measures of racialized sentiments against other marginalized ethnic and racial groups. Lajevardi (2020), for example, develops the Muslim American resentment (MAR) scale to operationalize the increasingly salient and politicized negative sentiment against the Muslim population. A group of scholars have also proposed novel measures of racial animus against Latinos in the country, which the existing measures of racial resentment and stereotypes fail to fully capture (Ramirez and Peterson 2020; Sergio and Ocampo 2020). Adding to this literature, Foxworth and Boulding (2022) test a new scale of racial resentment against Native Americans to document the continued salience of hostility and discrimination against the indigenous population.

Table 2.1: Asian American resentment and model minority stereotype scales: item wordings

Asian American resentment scale		Model minority stereotype scale	
AAR_1	Asian Americans are often overly competitive for their success.	*MMS_1*	Asian Americans have worked their way up through hard work and without asking for any special favors.
AAR_2	When it comes to education, Asian Americans strive to achieve too much.	*MMS_2*	The economic success of Asian Americans sets an example that other minorities can follow to improve their conditions.
AAR_3	Asian Americans need to embrace American values more.	*MMS_3*	Asian Americans in general are law-abiding and rarely cause much trouble in society.
AAR_4	It is annoying when Asian Americans speak in their own languages in public places.	*MMS_4*	Asian Americans are generally smart and that's why they excel in schools.

In line with this latest scholarship, I propose two novel measures of mass racial attitudes toward Asian Americans: the Asian American resentment (AAR) and model minority stereotype (MMS) scales, summarized in **Table 2.1**. I constructed these two, four-item scales to assess the extent to which individuals embrace the two abovementioned racial tropes associated with Asian Americans, namely the racialized perception of the group as "yellow peril" and "model minority." To construct the AAR scale, I built primarily on two existing scales of Asian American stereotypes in social psychology (Ho and Jackson 2001; Lin et al. 2005). Ho and Jackson (2001) employ a scale that covers both positive and negative stereotypes against Asian Americans, while Lin et al. (2005) develop the Scale of Anti-Asian American Stereotypes (SAAS), which focuses on excessive competence and low sociability as primary dimensions of anti-Asian racial prejudice. While these two scales cover a wide range of racialized images of Asian Americans, I extract and modify some of the scale's items to capture the two key pillars of the yellow peril racial trope: Asians as competitive and economically threatening (e.g., "*Asian Americans are often overly competitive for their success*"), and Asians as unassimilable to American society (e.g., "*Asian Americans need to embrace American values more*"). The final four scale items can be found in the left panel of **Table 2.1**.

I also constructed the MMS battery to reflect both the contextual specificity and comprehensive aspects of the model minority racial trope: the first two items describe Asians as having achieved economic success "through hard work and without asking for special favors," setting "an example that other minorities can follow." The other two items depict the group as "law-abiding" and "generally smart" (see the right panel of **Table 2.1**). Both scales were answered with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Taken together, my scales assess the extent to which individual Americans accept or reject the two most salient

racialized depictions of the minority group.

It should be stressed that neither of my scales includes reverse-coded items, which have been extensively used in previous measures of racial attitudes as a tool to reduce acquiescence bias (Lajevardi 2020). A few theoretical and methodological concerns discourage the use of reverse-coded items for my scales. First, reverse-coded items are best used for the case where the measured construct has clear opposite ends (Huddy and Bankert 2017). For example, a reverse-coded item in the symbolic racism[2] scale, "*Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve*," measures the extent to which people believe the minority group deserves more economic support, which clearly contradicts what constitutes contemporary anti-Black racial resentment. It is uncertain, however, whether each of my two constructs – the "yellow peril" and "model minority" racial tropes – has clear opposite ends that can be captured by reverse-coded items. A reverse-coded item for the AAR scale, for instance, would frame the same posited traits of Asian Americans in a "positive" light but as discussed above, we have reasons to believe that the seemingly positive view of Asians would not necessarily contradict the negative sentiments toward the group. Racialized views toward Asian Americans, in other words, are composed of both positive and negative views that are intricately connected to each other, making it difficult to interpret individual responses to reverse-coded items. Methodologically speaking, reverse-coded items can further complicate factor structures in this context.[3] Instead, my presented scales allow

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[2] To avoid confusion with my measure of anti-Asian racial resentment (the Asian American resentment scale), I use the term "symbolic racism" interchangeably with "racial resentment" for the widely used measure of anti-Black racial resentment, following e.g., Kinder and Sanders (1996) and Carmines, Sniderman, and Easter (2011).

[3] I also note that as Agadjanian et al. (forthcoming) point out, it is often unclear whether measures of racial attitudes capture the intensity or direction of opinion and whether they primarily reflect a favoring or disfavoring of the target racial group. While resolving this issue is beyond the scope of this chapter, I want to add that reverse-coded items can make it even harder to interpret responses to my scales.

me to more cleanly measure the two distinct racial tropes separately and examine their relationships to better understand the overall structure of mass racialized views toward Asian Americans.

2.4 Data and Methods

To test the validity and predictive power of my new scales, I rely on data from two original national surveys. I conducted the first survey in October 2021 and the second one in January 2022, using national samples of the U.S. population that were well balanced on key demographic covariates, recruited by Lucid (*n*=1,847) and Dynata (previously Survey Sampling International; *n*=1,010) respectively.[4] By utilizing two rounds of separate surveys with diverse national samples, I provide further credence to the validity and predictive power of my two novel measures of racial attitudes toward Asian Americans. For my analyses, I include all respondents who identified as white, black, or Hispanic/Latino Americans, believing that it is important to examine racialized views toward Asian Americans among both whites and non-whites.[5]

In addition to the two original scales, I included the same standard measures of symbolic racism, racial group favorability, social dominance orientation (SDO), and white racial identity in both surveys. I used a shortened version of the SDO scale (Sidanius and Pratto 1999) with seven statements answered on a 5-point scale, including "*It is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom,*" and "*No one group should dominate in society*" (reverse-coded). For white racial identity, I asked the self-identified white respondents the

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[4] Descriptive statistics of relevant demographic covariates from the Lucid and Dynata samples can be found in Table A1 in the appendix.

[5] I find that all the main results remain unchanged when I subset the data from both surveys to white respondents.

following question, "How important is being white to your identity?" (Jardina 2019), which was answered on a 5-point scale from "Extremely important" to "Not at all important." Additionally, I included in both surveys a measure of perceived financial stress to be tested as a potential dispositional correlate of racial attitudes and a measure of fiscal conservatism to be used as a control in my analyses on policy preferences.[6] In the Dynata survey, I added four standard racial stereotype questions ("hardworking-lazy", "intelligent-unintelligent", "violent-peaceful", "trustworthy-untrustworthy") answered on a 7-point scale (Sides and Gross 2013). Along with the favorability question, I utilize the stereotype scales to further test the validity of my new measures of racial attitudes toward Asian Americans. **Table A.1** in the appendix displays summary statistics of all the key measures included in the two surveys. Finally, I incorporated open-ended questions to the Dynata survey, allowing respondents to express their reactions to each scale item. For both surveys, I also included a range of racial policy preference questions measuring support for public policies concerning Asian or Black Americans, which will be explained in detail in the next section.

2.5 Findings

2.5.1   Structure of racialized views toward Asian Americans

To begin with, data from both surveys confirm the theorized dimensionality of mass racialized sentiments toward Asian Americans, anchored at one end by the resentful view of Asians as a competitive threat and on the other by the seemingly positive projection of the group as a "model minority." As summarized in **Figure 2.1**, a confirmatory factor analysis shows that each scale item significantly loads onto its respective higher-order factor. Based on the conventional

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[6] See the appendix for detailed item wordings.

measures of model fit – the comparative fit index (CFI) = .91 (.93), the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) = .07 (.06), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .10 (.09), and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .87 (.90) – I also confirm that the two-factor model adequately fits the data.[7] The four items in each scale cohere well together, demonstrating the internal consistency of the two measures: Cronbach's alpha averaged across the two surveys equals .77 for the AAR and .78 for the MMS. Given the scale reliability, I then calculate the composite AAR and MMS scores by averaging the four items for each scale and use these aggregate scores for the rest of the analyses below.
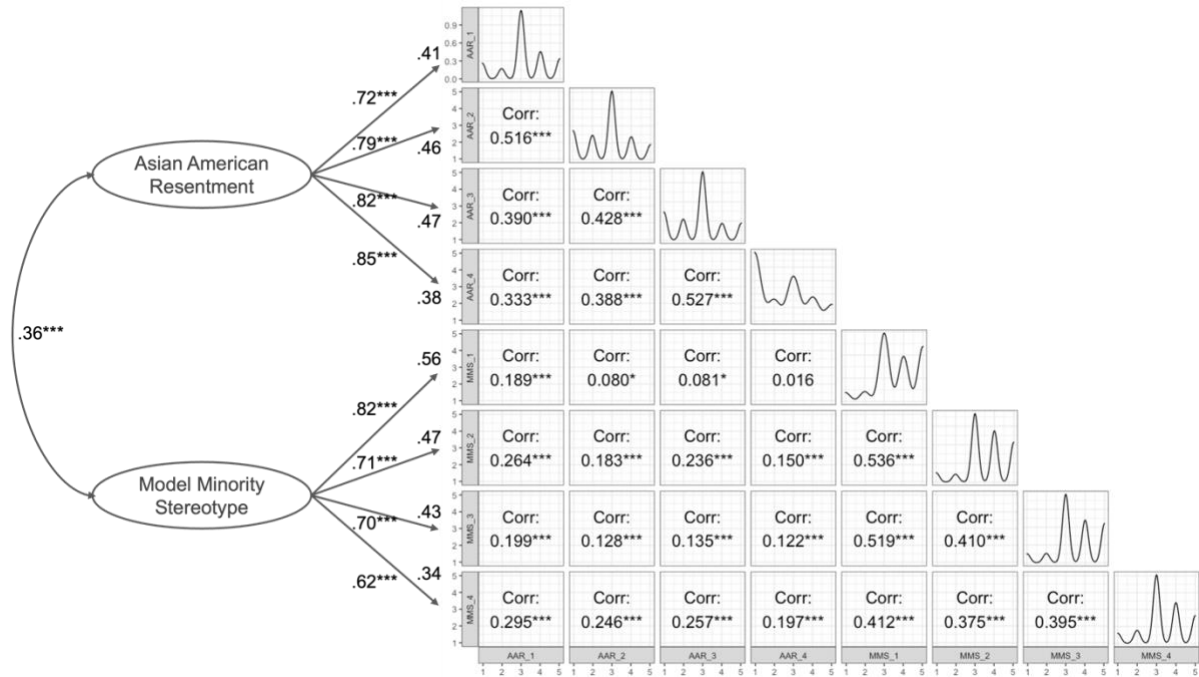
Note: The figure displays the key parameter estimates from a confirmatory factor analysis (the left panel) and Pearson correlation coefficients among the eight scale items (the right panel) from the Dynata survey. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$. Results from the Lucid survey can be found in the appendix.

Figure 2.1: Confirmatory factor analysis and inter-item correlations

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[7] The entries in parentheses are from the Lucid survey.

The above findings suggest that the AAR and MMS scales perform well in capturing the two distinct dimensions of racialized views toward Asian Americans. How do these two key components relate to each other? As shown in **Figure 2.1** again, the confirmatory factor analysis reveals that the two higher-order factors, corresponding to AAR and MMS respectively, are significantly and positively correlated, albeit at a weak-to-moderate level ($r = .36$). Examining the inter-item correlations on the right side of **Figure 2.1**, I find that such positive correlations are found across almost all combinations of the eight scale items but are especially strong between the perception that Asians are smart (*MMS_4*) on the one hand and the view of the group as overly competitive (*AAR_1*), over-achieving (*AAR_2*), and un-American (*AAR_3*) on the other. Those who agree that Asian Americans' relative economic success sets an example for other minorities (*MMS_2*) also tend to feel negative sentiments toward the group, most readily accepting the view that Asians are competitive (*AAR_1*) and should embrace American values more (*AAR_3*).
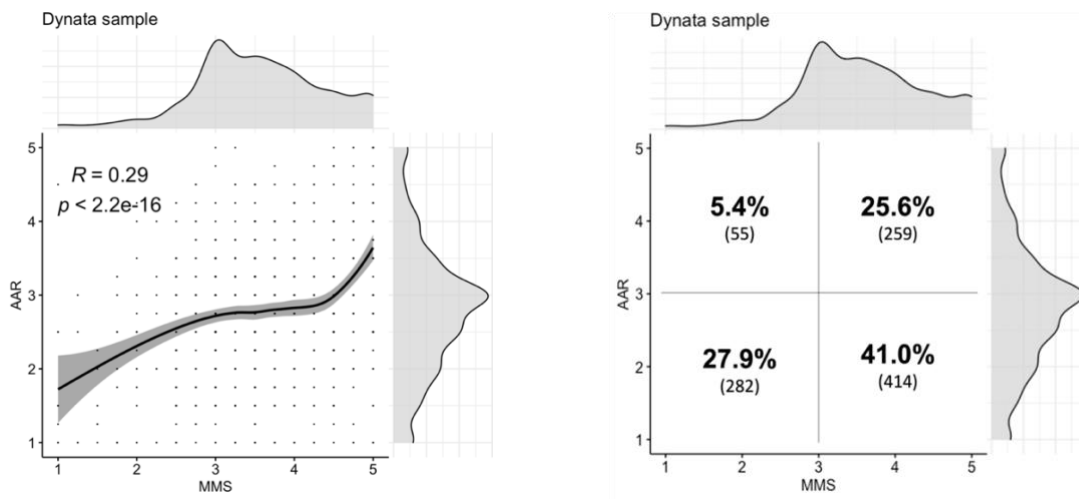
Note: The left panel displays scatter plots and density plots of AAR and MMS, including smoothed loess lines with shaded bands indicating 95 percent confidence intervals and a Pearson correlation coefficient between the two scales. The right panel shows the distributions of responses to the two scales split by the midpoint (3="neither agree nor disagree") with raw counts in parentheses. Both panels are based on the Dynata sample, and the same results with the Lucid sample can be found in the appendix.

Figure 2.2: Distributions of and correlations between AAR and MMS

Using the composite AAR and MMS scales, again I observe a positive and statistically significant association between the two scales ($r = .29$) across both surveys, as shown in the left panel of **Figure 2.2**. On the right panel of **Figure 2.2**, we can see that up to one-third of the respondents scored high on both AAR and MMS, agreeing or strongly agreeing with the scale items (25.6% in the Dynata survey and 32.8% in the Lucid survey). Conversely, about one-fourth of the respondents scored low on both scales (27.9% and 24.4% respectively in each survey). In other words, for over half of the American public, the two racial tropes tend to go hand in hand, with higher (lower) levels of one scale associated with higher (lower) levels of the other. In the above discussion, I posited that the two racialized views both originate from *and* serve to maintain the dominant racial hierarchy in America, which triangulates Asian Americans between different racial groups by subjecting them simultaneously to relative valorization (as a "model minority" vis-à-vis other "problem minorities") and marginalization (as outsiders and a potential threat to "mainstream" American society). The data thus suggest that almost one-third of ordinary Americans subscribe to such a dual racialization of Asian Americans while another 25% reject both racial tropes as legitimate depictions of the minority group.

At the same time, I find that about 40% of the respondents readily accept the model minority trope (scoring high on MMS) while refusing to embrace the resentful views (low on AAR) (41% and 35.1% in each survey). Only a small minority, however, scored high on AAR while scoring low on MMS (5.4% and 7.6%). This result indicates that most Americans are still willing to accept the model minority stereotypes of Asian Americans, due in part to its ostensibly positive and benign depiction of the group. To summarize, Americans hold varying levels of racialized views toward Asian Americans, along the two distinct dimensions of racial tropes that can be captured by the proposed scales. In the final empirical section, I demonstrate how the two racial

tropes exert distinct effects on racial policy preferences, both independently and by interacting with each other. Below, I first examine the demographic and dispositional predictors of the two scales and review open-ended responses to probe individual reactions to the scale items in more detail.

2.5.2 Correlates of AAR and MMS
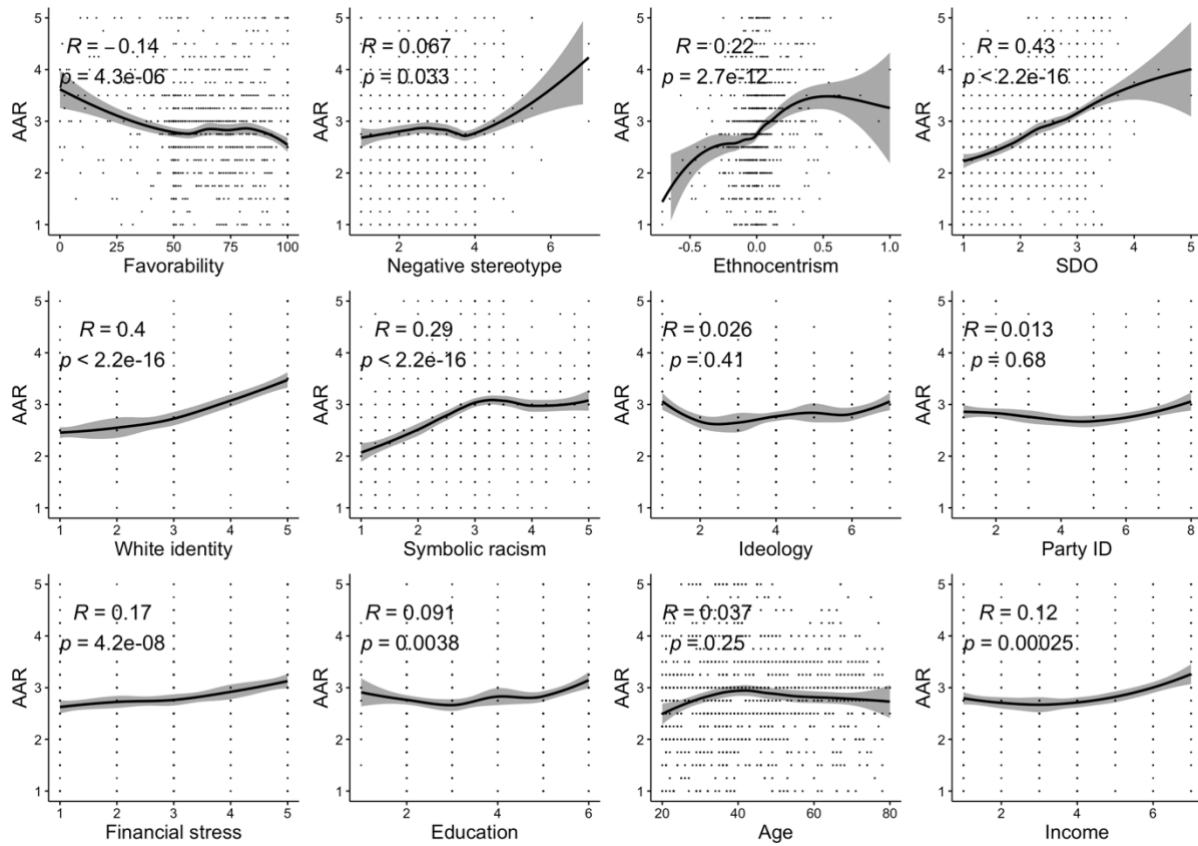
Note: The figure displays scatter plots and correlations between AAR and demographic and dispositional traits. The plots include smoothed loess lines with shaded bands indicating 95 percent confidence intervals and Pearson correlation coefficients with *p* values. The results are based on the Dynata sample, and the replicated results with the Lucid sample can be found in the appendix.

Figure 2.3: Demographic and dispositional correlates of AAR

Now that we have examined the overall structure of racialized views toward Asian Americans, I turn to the following question in this section: Who is more likely to hold resentful

sentiments toward Asian Americans and/or perceive the group as the "model minority"? **Figure 2.3** visualizes correlations between the respondents' levels of AAR and key individual demographic and dispositional traits. First, as expected, those who feel less favorable and hold more negative stereotypes toward Asian Americans are significantly more likely to score higher on AAR. Next, among all variables, key related dispositional and psychological traits were found to be the strongest predictors of resentful sentiments toward the minority group: Higher levels of ethnocentrism and SDO – generalized views on inter-group relations – are significantly associated with higher levels of AAR, indicating that Americans predisposed to in-group favoritism and social hierarchy are more likely to hold negative views of Asians in the country. Racial conservatism, as captured by white racial identity and anti-Black racial resentment, is also found to be strongly associated with higher levels of AAR.

Interestingly, political ideology and party identification are found to be unrelated to AAR, suggesting that anti-Asian sentiments are distributed across all political orientations and are not especially salient among conservatives and Republicans. I find, however, that levels of financial stress exert some palpable effects on anti-Asian feelings, most likely by inflating perceived inter-group competition and provoking a sense of envy and resentment toward the group. Finally, higher levels of education and income are found to be positively correlated with higher AAR scores. This result might be at least partially driven by individuals who have more direct experiences in competing with Asian Americans in higher education and job markets.
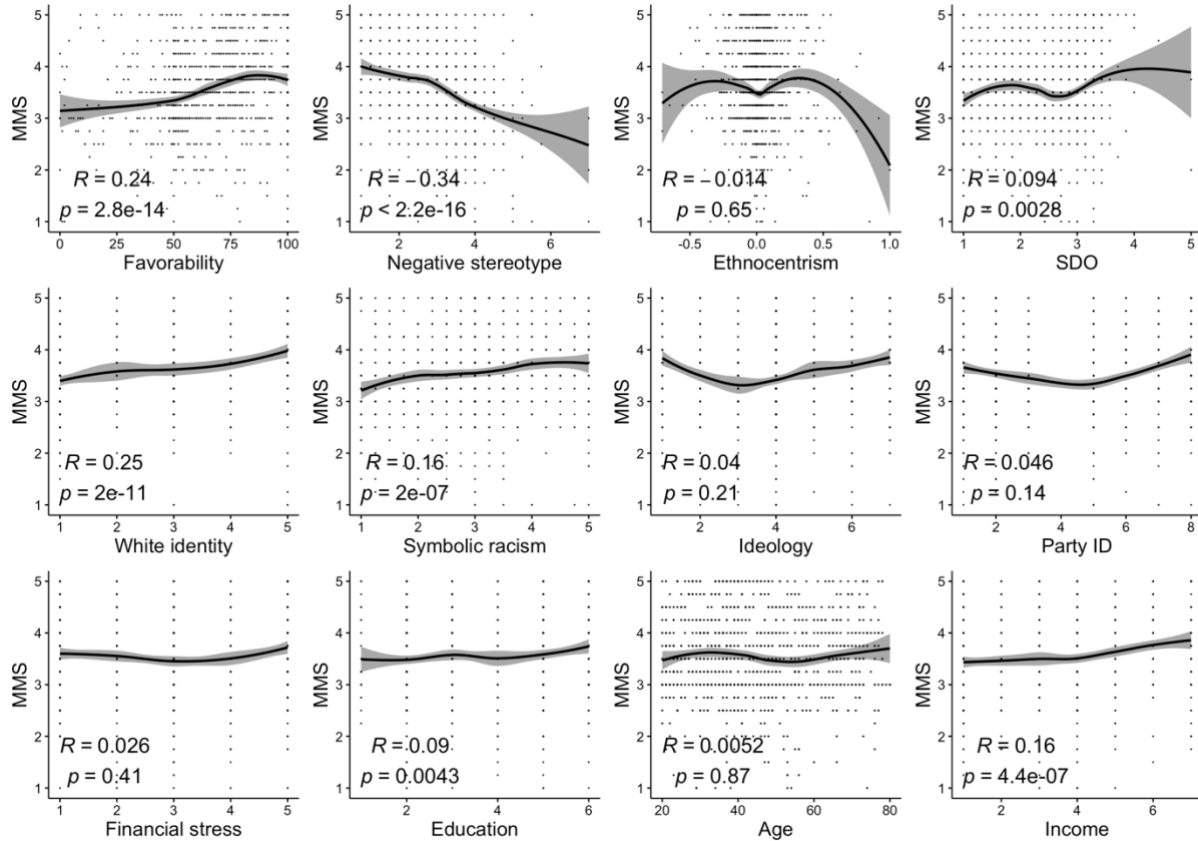
Note: The figure displays scatter plots and correlations between AAR and demographic and dispositional traits (Dynata sample). The plots include smoothed loess lines with shaded bands indicating 95 percent confidence intervals and Pearson correlation coefficients with *p* values.

Figure 2.4: Demographic and dispositional correlates of MMS

Figure 2.4, in turn, shows correlations between levels of MMS and the same demographic and dispositional traits. First, individuals who feel warmer and hold fewer negative stereotypes toward Asian Americans are significantly more likely to view them as a "model minority." This finding again suggests that many ordinary Americans accept the racial trope as a positive and benign depiction of the minority group. The data further reveals, however, that those who embrace the racialized view also tend to be more racially conservative and favor social hierarchy in general. As discussed above, the model minority racial trope, despite its ostensibly positive tone, serves to maintain the dominant racial hierarchy by promoting the "myth" of Asian American success and

thereby downplaying the persistence of racial inequality (Yi and Museus 2016). My findings seem to align with this insight, as higher levels of racial conservatism and SDO significantly predict higher MMS scores. In **Figure A.5** in the appendix, I additionally show the close connection between the model minority racial trope and anti-*Black* racial resentment: Most notably, those who agree more strongly that Asians have achieved relative economic success through hard work are also more likely to believe that African Americans should do the same "without any special favors."

Next, I once again find null effects for political ideology and party identification, which suggest that political orientations do not predispose individuals toward accepting or rejecting the model minority racial trope. Levels of financial stress also have no effects on MMS scores. Finally, I find that higher levels of education and income significantly predict higher levels of MMS. More educated and higher-income individuals, in other words, tend to have more ambivalent views of Asian Americans, considering them simultaneously as a competitive threat *and* a "model minority."

2.5.3   Open-ended responses

To analyze in more detail how the survey respondents reacted to the AAR and MMS scales, now I turn to data from open-ended questions I embedded in the Dynata survey. By examining these cognitive responses to each scale item, I can further probe how ordinary Americans actually think and feel about the two prominent racial tropes of Asian Americans. Following Kam and Burge (2018), I asked the following question after the participants answered each scale item for AAR and MMS: "*Thinking about the question you just answered, exactly what things went through your mind? Please type your response below.*" Two coders independently hand-coded the open-ended responses to identify the key themes informing how individuals understood and reacted to

the AAR and MMS scales.[8] The coders were blind to the respondents' scores on each scale and other background characteristics as well as the purpose of the study. For my analysis, I focus on four key themes identified in the open-ended responses: positive traits of Asian Americans, negative traits of Asian Americans, affirmation of individualism, and rejection of the item statement itself as prejudiced.
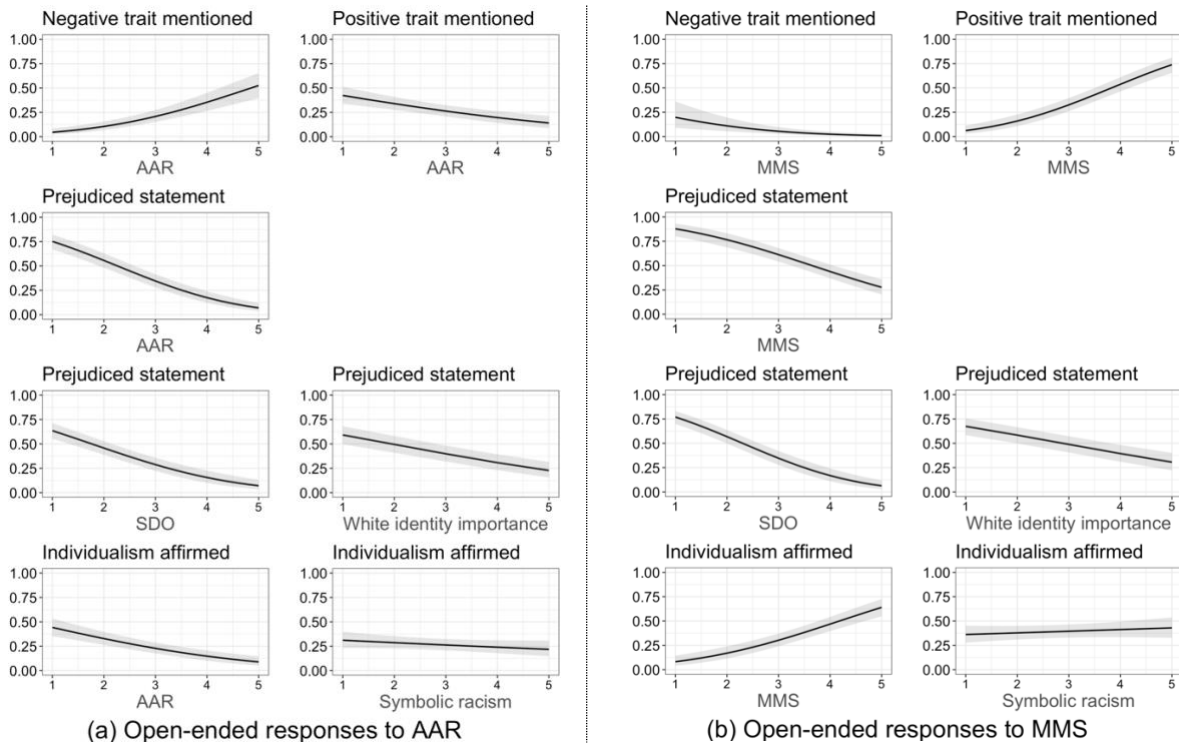
Note: The figure displays the predicted probabilities of key themes appearing in open-ended responses to the AAR (left panel) and MMS (right panel) scales in the Dynata sample, derived from estimates in Tables A.3 and A.4 in the appendix.

Figure 2.5: Cognitive responses to AAR and MMS scale items

Figure 2.5 summarizes the predicted probabilities of the four key themes appearing in open-ended responses for each scale, based on AAR and MMS scores and some of the other key

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[8] See Table A.2 in the appendix for the detailed coding protocol and inter-coder reliability scores.

dispositional traits. First, I find that a significant portion of the responses included positive characterizations of Asian Americans (e.g., "*Hardworking*," "*Diligent*," "*This is a very good thing*."), mentioned at least once by about 39% of respondents for the AAR battery and 39% for the MMS battery. As shown in **Figure 2.5**, those who scored higher on AAR were less likely to offer a comment in this category, while those who embrace the model minority trope were more likely to characterize Asians in a positive light. This result thus aligns with the above finding that favorable feelings toward Asian Americans tend to go hand in hand with the perception of the group as a "model minority." Similarly, about 15% and 5% of respondents described the racial group in an explicitly negative light in their responses to the AAR and MMS scales respectively (e.g., "*How annoying it is*," "*It makes them less human-like*," "*Money minds*."), and such negative comments were associated with higher levels of AAR and lower levels of MMS.

Next, about 33% and 35% of respondents referred at least once to principles of individualism in a positive light in their responses to the AAR and MMS battery respectively (e.g., "*Work ethic*," "*There is nothing wrong with striving to succeed*," "*Asians are hardworking*."). As shown at the bottom of **Figure 2.5**, I find that a lower (higher) AAR (MMS) score is associated with a higher likelihood of providing comments in this category. This result suggests that how one views principles of individualism partially affects the person's attitudes toward Asian Americans: Those who value hard work, for instance, are more likely to accept the racialized view of Asian Americans as a "model minority" and are less likely to feel resentful toward the group.

Finally, I found that about 37% and 49% of respondents commented directly on the AAR and MMS scale item statements respectively, pointing out that the statements reflect prejudiced perspectives on the Asian population and that the described characteristics have nothing to do with race or ethnicity. For example, responses in this category included "*Most people have worked*

hard to get to where they are," "*Anybody can get ahead if they work hard enough*," "*Everyone, no specific race, is competitive for success*," and "*Race has nothing to do with achieving anythin*g." As shown in the same figure, those who scored low on either scale were much more likely to offer comments in this category. Simply put, a significant portion of the American public also rejects both racial tropes as prejudiced and inaccurate characterizations of Asian Americans. The analysis further reveals that respondents higher on SDO and white racial identity were significantly *less* likely to offer comments in this category; moving from the lowest to the highest values of SDO and white identity, respondents became approximately 30 to 60 percentage points less likely to dismiss the AAR and MMS scale items as prejudiced. In other words, more racially conservative individuals find it less problematic to characterize Asian Americans with the two most outstanding racial tropes.

2.5.4   Effects on racial policy preferences

Finally, I analyzed the effects of AAR and MMS on support for public policies that affect Asian Americans. Across the two surveys, I measured levels of mass support for policies that promote increased numbers of Asian immigrants, Asian American elected officials, Asian American students in top universities, foreign Chinese college students, and more federal spending on addressing anti-Asian hate crimes.[9] As summarized in **Table 2.2**, I ran a series of OLS regression models, with AAR and MMS scales entered alone, together, or jointly as combinations of high versus low levels.[10] Across these different specifications, we can observe that higher levels

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[9] See **Table A.10** in the appendix for exact question wordings.
[10] As in **Figure 2.2**, I divided the sample into four subgroups in line with the cross-tabulation of high versus low AAR and MMS, with a composite score higher than 3 classified as "high" for each scale.

of AAR significantly lowered mass support for pro-Asian public policies while higher levels of MMS significantly predict increased support for Asian Americans. Whether entered alone or together with MMS, a unit increase in AAR leads to about 2 to 4 percentage points decrease in the level of support for the racialized policy measures. MMS exerts opposite effects on policy preferences, with one unit increase in MMS associated with an approximate 4 to 7 percentage points increase in the level of public support for the same policies.

Table 2.2: AAR, MMS, and support for pro-Asian public policies

	More Asian immigrants		More Asian American elected officials		More Asian American students in top universities		More spend on hate crime	More foreign Chinese students
	Lucid (1)	Dynata (2)	Lucid (3)	Dynata (4)	Lucid (5)	Dynata (6)	Lucid (7)	Dynata (8)
Each scale alone								
AAR	-.02**	-.01	-.04***	-.01	.0002	.01	-.02***	.01
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
MMS	.04***	.05***	.06***	.06***	.07***	.07***	.05***	.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.005)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Both scales together								
AAR	-.02***	-.02**	-.04***	-.03***	-.01	-.01	-.03***	.0003
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
MMS	.05***	.05***	.06***	.07***	.07***	.07***	.05***	.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.005)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
AAR x MMS								
High MMS, low AAR	.03*	.02	.07***	.08***	.11***	.06***	.07***	.02
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)
Low MMS, high AAR	-.11***	-.13***	-.11***	-.13***	-.02	-.12***	-.09***	-.09**
	(.02)	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)
High MMS, high AAR	.004	.05*	.02	.08***	.11***	.10***	.04*	.06**
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Adjusted R^2								
AAR only	.17	.12	.18	.13	.04	.08	.20	.21
MMS only	.20	.16	.21	.20	.13	.17	.23	.23
Both scales	.20	.16	.24	.21	.13	.17	.24	.23
AAR x MMS	.19	.14	.20	.18	.09	.14	.22	.22
N	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. Each model controls for dispositional and demographic covariates. Both AAR and MMS as well as key dispositional covariates are standardized for comparison of effect sizes. Full results can be found in the appendix. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

The same effects are observed when I compare the policy preferences among subgroups with different combined levels of AAR and MMS. As shown in **Table 2.2**, individuals in the "*high MMS and low AAR*" subgroup are about 3 to 11 percentage points more likely to support the pro-Asian policies than those in the baseline "*low MMS and low AAR*" group. Conversely, those scoring low on the MMS but high on the AAR ("*low MMS and high AAR*") are significantly *less* likely to support such policies by approximately 9 to 13 percentage points, translating their resentful sentiment directly into more conservative racial policy preferences. Interestingly, those who score high on both the AAR and the MMS are significantly more likely to support the pro-Asian policy measures, suggesting that the model minority stereotype racial trope exerts more pronounced effects than anti-Asian racial resentment when it comes to racial policy preference formation.

2.6 Discussion

In this chapter, I proposed two novel measures of contemporary Asian American racial tropes and utilized them to empirically investigate the structure and political effects of such racialized views toward the minority population in the United States. Based on two rounds of national surveys, I first showed the continued popularity of the two racial tropes among the American public – over 30% of respondents agree with the characterization of Asian Americans as foreign and overly competitive while almost 70% accept the view of the group as a "model minority." Furthermore, these two seemingly contradictory racial tropes appear to go hand in hand for many ordinary Americans: Almost one-third of respondents subscribe to both racial tropes simultaneously. This *Janus-faced* racialization of Asian Americans stems from and ultimately helps reproduce the distinct configuration of racial hierarchy within American society: while

conveniently projected as role models to other minorities, Asian Americans remain marginalized as "perpetual foreigners" whose presumed competence concurrently stokes racialized fear and envy. I additionally showed, however, that despite such interconnection, the two racial tropes have opposite effects on mass racial policy preferences: Those who hold resentful views of Asian Americans are less likely to support public policies that benefit the group while individuals who embrace the model minority trope are more supportive of such policies.

Several limitations in the scope of the paper suggest promising avenues for future research. First, while this study provided a "snapshot" of contemporary racialized attitudes toward Asian Americans, future studies can examine the extent to which the two racial tropes might interact with each other in a more *dynamic* fashion. For example, for those who perceive Asian Americans as a model minority, under what conditions would they feel threatened by and become resentful of the racial group? Relatedly, for those who view Asian Americans simultaneously as a model minority and a competitive threat, when do they become less supportive of pro-Asian public policies? Future research can thus identify the contexts and policy domains under which such racial resentment (vis-à-vis the model minority trope) comes to exert stronger effects on policy preferences. The exponential growth of anti-Asian hate crimes during the COVID-19 pandemic has aptly demonstrated the continued vulnerability of Asian Americans to racial animus and violence. More research can be conducted to examine whether and how such changing political environments induce stronger effects of racial resentment on mass political attitudes and behavior.

Second, I analyzed the political implications of Asian American racial tropes in terms of mass support for public policies that affect the minority population. Future studies can expand the scope of inquiry by examining the potential effects of racialized sentiments on a broader range of political behavior such as candidate evaluation, vote choice, and party identification. Lajevardi

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and Abrajano (2019) find that anti-Muslim racial resentment, above and beyond other anti-minority sentiments, exerted palpable effects on the support for Trump in the 2016 Presidential election. Scholars can also probe the relevance of racial animus against Asians in predicting vote choices in both 2016 and 2020, especially given the centrality of anti-China political rhetoric during the Trump campaigns. Building on a recent study by Hajnal and Rivera (2014) on the role of anti-immigrant and anti-Latino sentiments in shifting white Americans away from the Democratic Party, researchers can also utilize my validated measures of Asian American racial tropes to probe whether attitudes toward Asians predict the American public's changing partisan identities.

In this paper, I examined the relatively overlooked dimension of American racial and ethnic politics by focusing on the complex and multi-faceted mass racial attitudes toward Asian Americans. As American society is grappling with more explicit and politicized racial fault lines, and at a time when the Asian American community faces growing violence and hatred, my work directly unravels the peculiar ways in which Asians have been racialized in the United States. With more scholars now working on the issues of Asian American politics, my findings set the stage for more empirical work on the structure and political implications of racial attitudes toward the minority group in an increasingly diverse American society.

2.7 Acknowledgments

2.8 Appendix

Table A.1: Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Racial attitudes:				
AAR (composite)	2.99 (2.81)	.91 (.92)	1 (1)	5 (5)
AAR_1	3.19 (3.18)	1.07 (1.12)	1 (1)	5 (5)
AAR_2	2.90 (2.82)	1.16 (1.17)	1 (1)	5 (5)
AAR_3	3.14 (2.83)	1.11 (1.19)	1 (1)	5 (5)
AAR_4	2.73 (2.42)	1.32 (1.37)	1 (1)	5 (5)
MMS (composite)	3.59 (3.56)	.77 (.81)	1 (1)	5 (5)
MMS_1	3.64 (3.68)	.99 (1.09)	1 (1)	5 (5)
MMS_2	3.62 (3.59)	.99 (1.05)	1 (1)	5 (5)
MMS_3	3.64 (3.56)	.97 (1.07)	1 (1)	5 (5)
MMS_4	3.46 (3.39)	.97 (1.06)	1 (1)	5 (5)
Symbolic racism	2.95 (2.93)	1.06 (1.05)	1 (1)	5 (5)
Favorability – Asian	63.94 (66.35)	24.11 (23.10)	0 (0)	100 (100)
Favorability – White	67.11 (65.27)	25.54 (24.65)	0 (0)	100 (100)
Favorability – Black	65.85 (66.26)	25.05 (24.02)	0 (0)	100 (100)
Favorability – Hispanic	64.79 (65.57)	24.48 (23.87)	0 (0)	100 (100)
Stereotype – Asian	-- (2.98)	-- (1.04)	-- (1)	-- (7)
Stereotype – White	-- (3.53)	-- (1.13)	-- (1)	-- (7)
Stereotype – Black	-- (3.58)	-- (1.15)	-- (1)	-- (7)
Stereotype – Hispanic	-- (3.37)	-- (1.07)	-- (1)	-- (7)
Dispositions:				
Ethnocentrism	-- (.02)	-- (.16)	-- (-.72)	-- (1)
Social dominance orientation	2.34 (2.28)	.81 (.81)	1 (1)	5 (5)
White identity importance	2.69 (2.65)	.41 (.47)	1 (1)	5 (5)
Financial stress	3.02 (2.86)	1.34 (1.33)	1 (1)	5 (5)
Fiscal conservatism	2.70 (2.67)	1.14 (1.20)	1 (1)	5 (5)
Demographics:				
Republican	.29 (.29)	.46 (.45)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Democrat	.45 (.49)	.50 (.50)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Independent	.25 (.22)	.44 (.41)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Ideology	3.85 (3.96)	1.75 (1.73)	1 (1)	7 (7)
White	.78 (.67)	.41 (.47)	0 (0)	1 (1)
College degree	.29 (.34)	.46 (.47)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Female	.52 (.53)	.50 (.50)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Age	3.54 (44.89)	1.63 (16.49)	1 (18)	6 (88)
Income	3.19 (3.50)	1.78 (1.90)	1 (1)	7 (7)
Unemployed	.17 (.14)	.48 (.48)	0 (0)	1 (1)

Note: The table summarizes key descriptive statistics of racial attitudes, dispositional variables, and demographics across Lucid (*n*=1,847) and Dynata (*n*=1,010) samples. Entries from Dynata are in parentheses. Both samples include white, Black, and Hispanic respondents only. Entries for white identity importance are based on a subset of white respondents.
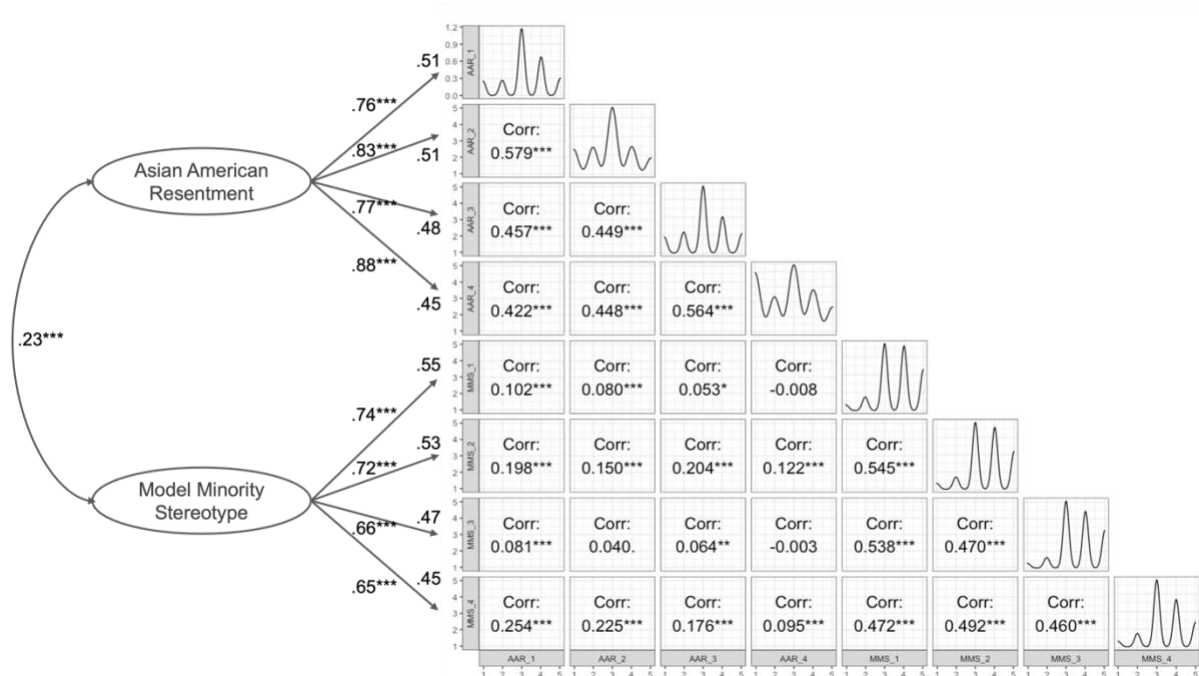
Note: The figure displays the key parameter estimates from a confirmatory factor analysis (the left panel) and Pearson correlation coefficients among the eight scale items (the right panel). * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Figure A.1: Confirmatory factor analysis and correlation matrix (Lucid sample)
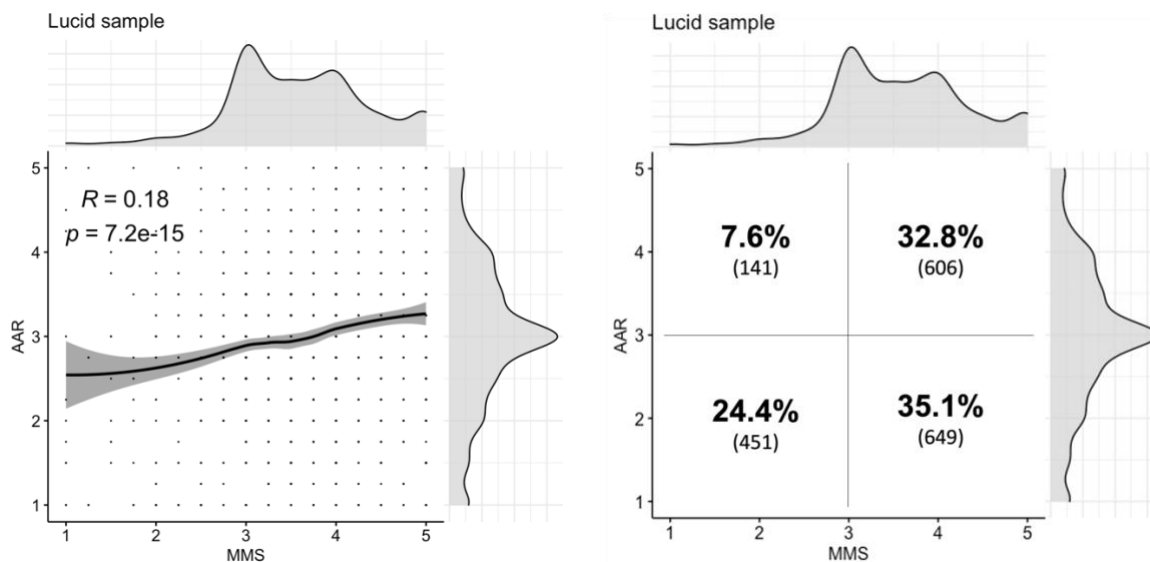
Note: The left panel displays scatter plots and density plots of AAR and MMS across the two surveys, including smoothed loess lines with shaded bands indicating 95 percent confidence intervals and a Pearson correlation coefficient between the two scales. The right panel shows the distributions of responses to the two scales split by the midpoint (3="neither agree nor disagree") with raw counts in parentheses.

Figure A.2: Distributions of and correlations between AAR and MMS (Lucid sample)
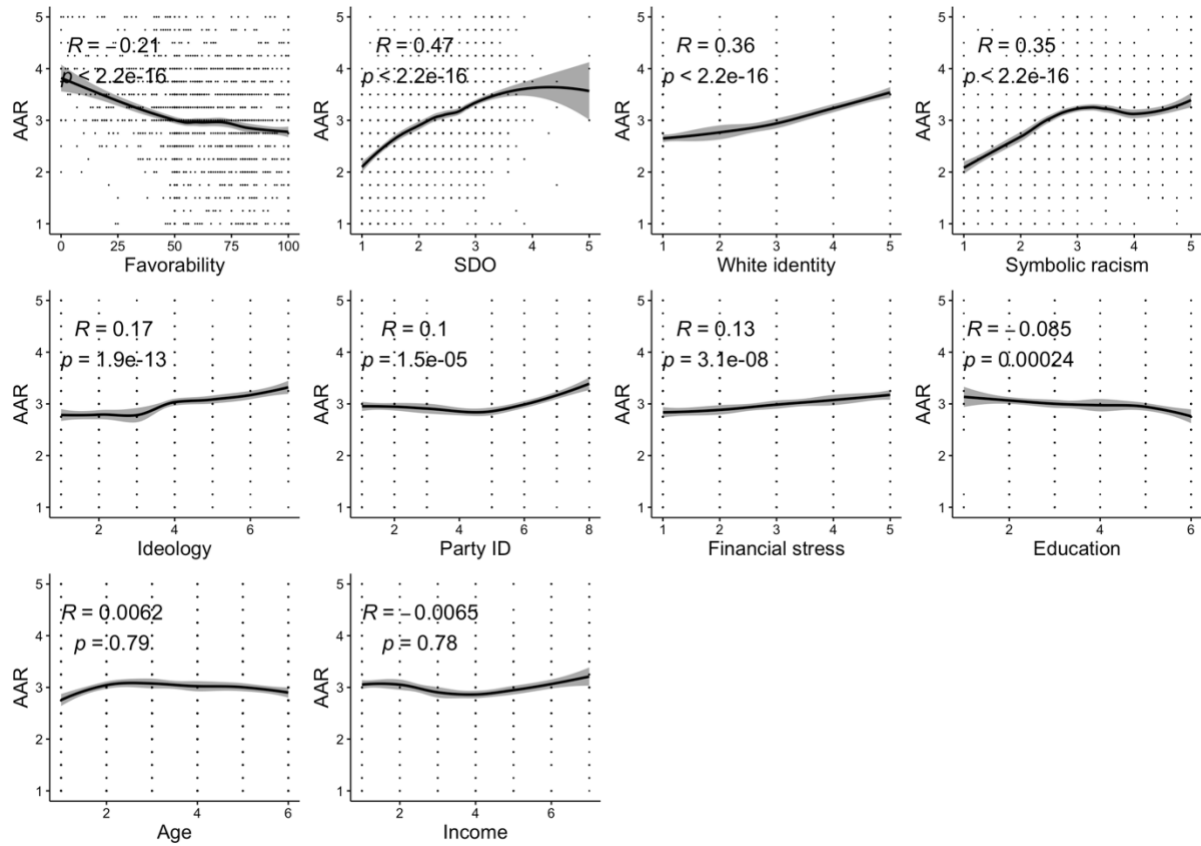
Note: The figure displays scatter plots and correlations between AAR and demographic and dispositional traits (Lucid sample). The plots include smoothed loess lines with shaded bands indicating 95 percent confidence intervals and Pearson correlation coefficients with *p* values.

Figure A.3: Demographic and dispositional correlates of AAR (Lucid sample)
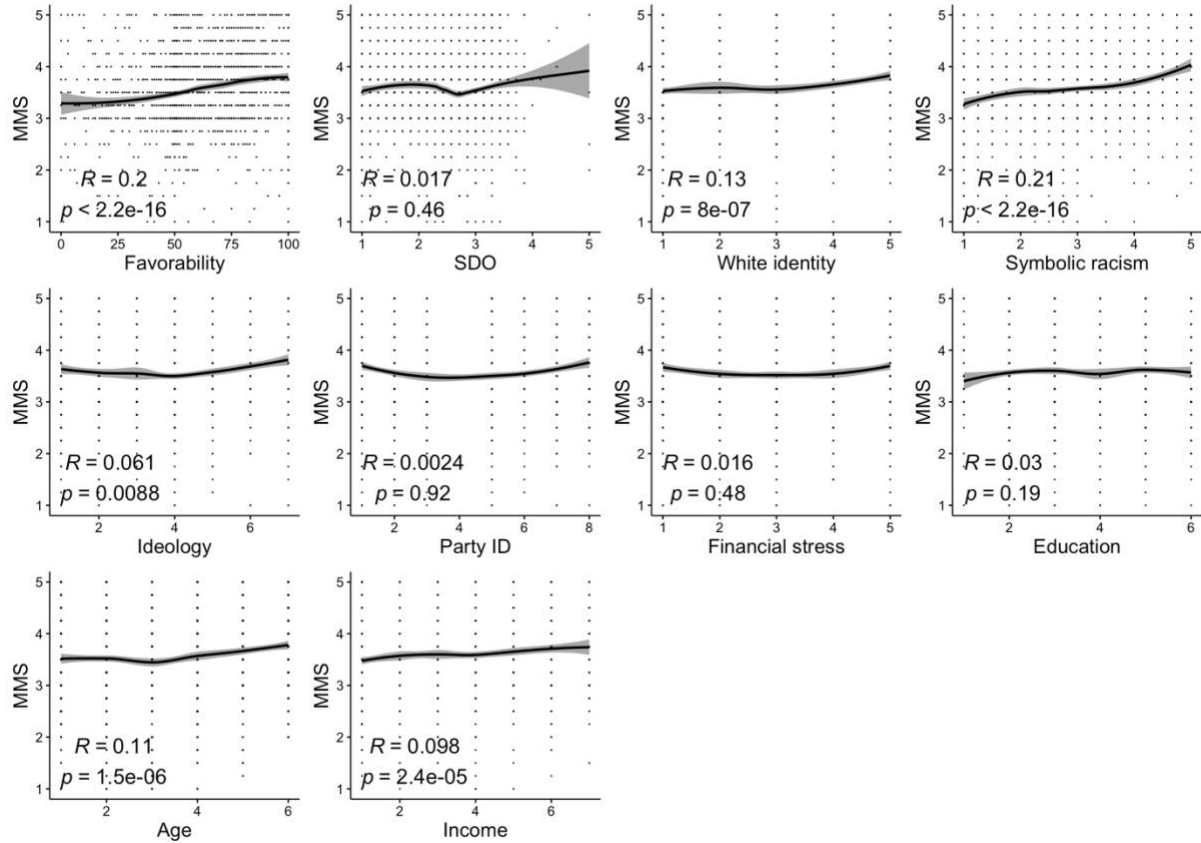
Note: The figure displays scatter plots and correlations between AAR and demographic and dispositional traits (Lucid sample). The plots include smoothed loess lines with shaded bands indicating 95 percent confidence intervals.

Figure A.4: Demographic and dispositional correlates of MMS (Lucid sample)
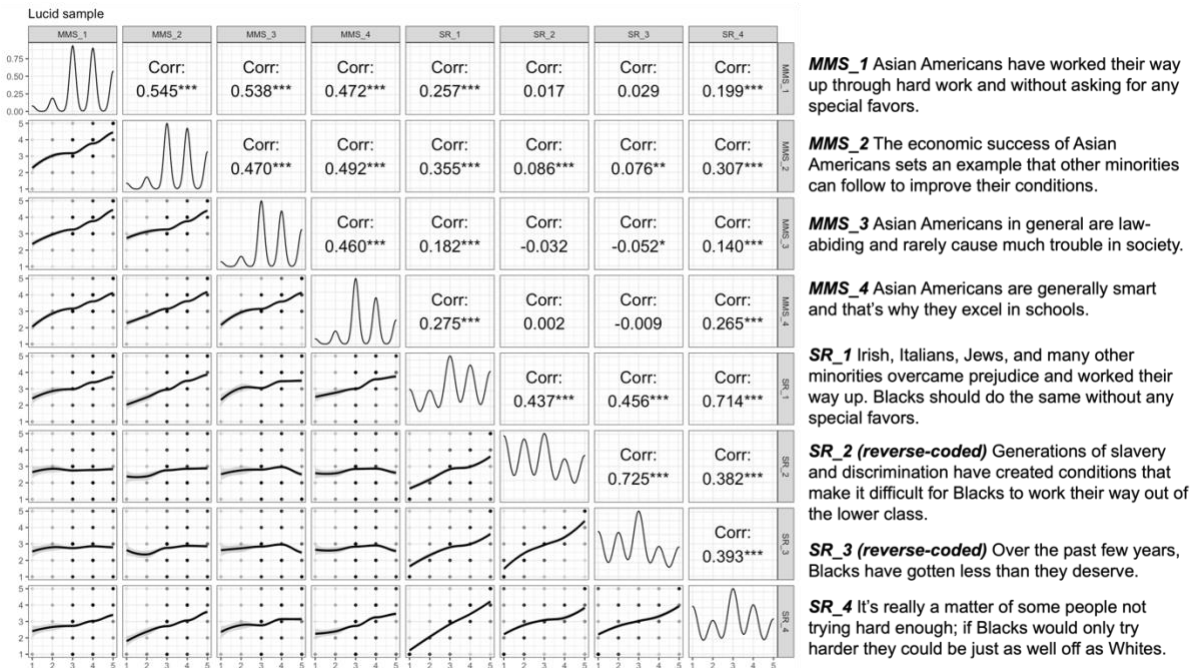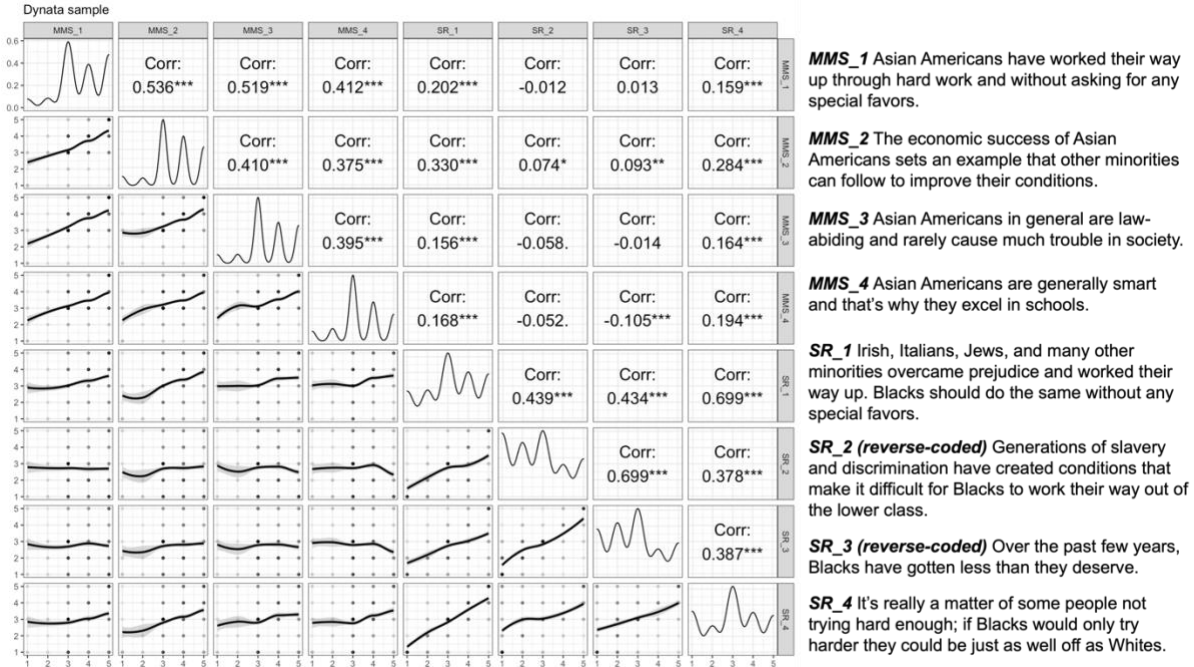
Note: The top panel displays Pearson correlation coefficients among the eight scale items of MMS and symbolic racism from the Dynata survey and the bottom panel displays the results from the Lucid survey. Corresponding scale item wordings are shown. * *p*<.05. ** *p*<.01. *** *p*<.001.

Figure A.5: Correlations between MMS and symbolic racism scale items

Table A.2: Open-ended coding protocol

Codeable content? (code)

0 = no (use if: blank/R writes don't know or not sure/R repeats the question)
1 = yes (use if: R provides any idea that is understandable and suggests some potentially code-able reaction to the question-including remarks about the question wording/bias in the questions/vagueness in the questions)

Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for AAR: .50 / 78.38
Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for MMS: .43 / 73.13

Reactions to the statement itself as racist/biased/prejudiced (rxn)

0 = no reaction
1 = R thinks the question/statement itself is racist/biased/prejudiced/stereotyped or made R uncomfortable (e.g., "racist statement")
2 = R thinks Asians are no different from/just like other groups or the traits have nothing to do with race/ethnicity (e.g., "we are all competitive," "Same as others," "It depends on the person," "Every Asian is different," "it has nothing to do with race)

Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for AAR: .71 / 93.38
Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for MMS: .72 / 91.53

Traits of Asians (tasian)

0 = no mention
1 = positive (mentioning explicitly positive traits, e.g., hardworking/smart, or endorsement of the statement in a positive light, e.g., "this is a very good thing," "there is nothing wrong with striving to succeed")
2 = neutral (mentioning positive & negative traits together, or endorsement of the statement in neither negative or positive light, e.g., "this is true," "they are born this way," "they want to make their parents proud")
3 = negative (mentioning explicitly negative traits, e.g., cold/overachieving/"money minds", or endorsement of the statement in a negative/sarcastic light, e.g., "How annoying it is," "…makes them less human like")

Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for AAR: .29 / 67.15
Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for MMS: .41 / 77.20

Individualism (individ)

0 = no individualism or work ethic-related comments mentioned
1 = affirmation of individualism (e.g., positively mentioning working hard/work ethic, "there is nothing wrong with striving to succeed," "Asians are hardworking")

Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for AAR: .34 / 94.03
Average inter-coder Cohen's kappa / percent agreement for MMS: .49 / 92.08

Table A.3: Predictors of key themes in open-ended responses to AAR scale items from Dynata sample

	Prejudiced statement	Negative trait mentioned	Positive trait mentioned	Individualism affirmed		Prejudiced statement	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
AAR	-.54***	.44***	-.22***	-.30***			
	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)			
Symbolic racism					-.07		
					(.05)		
SDO						-.45***	
						(.05)	
White identity							-.25***
							(.04)
Independent	.01	-.11	.06	.10	.12	.07	-.11
	(.12)	(.15)	(.11)	(.12)	(.12)	(.11)	(.14)
Republican	.06	.09	.46***	.35***	.36**	.06	-.001
	(.13)	(.14)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.15)
Ideology	-.03	.09*	.01	.02	.02	-.003	-.03
	(.03)	(.04)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)
Education	.01	-.09*	.06	.04	.03	.02	-.001
	(.03)	(.04)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)
Male	-.03	-.34**	.19*	.08	.04	-.07	-.17
	(.09)	(.11)	(.08)	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)	(.11)
Black	-.32**	-.28	-.02	.06	-.02	-.39***	
	(.12)	(.15)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	
Hispanic	-.15	-.11	.09	-.01	-.04	-.16	
	(.14)	(.18)	(.13)	(.14)	(.14)	(.14)	
Age	.002	.01	.01*	.01*	.01*	-.004	.002
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Income	-.03	.05	.03	.01	.01	-.04	-.03
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Constant	1.28***	-2.56***	-.53*	-.36	-.90***	1.04***	.60*
	(.24)	(.30)	(.22)	(.23)	(.22)	(.23)	(.24)
N	1,009	1,008	1,009	1,007	1,007	1,009	673

Note: Probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. * *p*<.05. ** *p*<.01. *** *p*<.001.

Table A.4: Predictors of key themes in open-ended responses to MMS scale items from Dynata sample

	Prejudiced statement	Negative trait mentioned	Positive trait mentioned	Individualism affirmed		Prejudiced statement	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
MMS	-.44***	-.38***	.55***	.44***			
	(.05)	(.09)	(.06)	(.06)			
Symbolic racism					.04		
					(.05)		
SDO						-.57***	
						(.05)	
White identity							-.24***
							(.03)
Independent	-.01	-.55*	-.18	-.02	-.14	.16	.06
	(.11)	(.23)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.11)	(.14)
Republican	.05	-.13	.07	.04	.06	.06	.05
	(.12)	(.21)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.14)
Ideology	-.04	-.08	.02	.01	.004	-.01	-.03
	(.03)	(.05)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)
Education	.01	-.04	-.01	-.02	-.01	.02	.002
	(.03)	(.06)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)
Male	-.01	.25	-.16	-.14	-.07	-.03	-.11
	(.08)	(.15)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)	(.08)	(.10)
Black	-.26*	.22	-.29*	-.24*	-.29**	-.16	
	(.11)	(.17)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	
Hispanic	-.30*	.06	-.005	-.05	-.03	-.32*	
	(.13)	(.25)	(.14)	(.14)	(.13)	(.13)	
Age	.0001	.01	.003	.01**	.01**	-.01*	-.0003
	(.003)	(.005)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Income	.001	-.06	-.01	-.05	-.04	-.01	.02
	(.03)	(.05)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Constant	1.75***	-.23	-2.25***	-2.00***	-.57**	1.56***	.71**
	(.27)	(.45)	(.28)	(.28)	(.22)	(.24)	(.24)
N	1,009	1,009	1,009	1,009	1,009	1,009	673

Note: Probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. * *p*<.05. ** *p*<.01. *** *p*<.001.

Table A.5: AAR and support for racialized public policies

	More Asian immigrants		More Asian American elected officials		More Asian American students in top universities		More spend on hate crime	More foreign Chinese students
	Lucid (1)	Dynata (2)	Lucid (3)	Dynata (4)	Lucid (5)	Dynata (6)	Lucid (7)	Dynata (8)
AAR	-.02**	-.01	-.04***	-.01	.0002	.01	-.02***	.01
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Symbolic racism	-.04***	-.02**	-.04***	-.04***	-.003	-.02*	-.06***	-.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Fiscal conservatism	-.04***	-.04***	-.03***	-.03***	-.04***	-.03***	-.06***	-.05***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Independent	-.04*	-.04*	-.05***	-.08***	-.02	-.07***	-.05***	-.06**
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)
Republican	-.06***	-.005	-.02	-.004	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.05*
	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Ideology	-.01	-.02	-.02*	-.02*	-.004	-.02*	-.02**	-.03***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010
Adjusted R^2	.17	.12	.18	.13	.04	.08	.20	.21

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. Key covariates shown in the table are standardized for easier comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table A.6: MMS and support for racialized public policies

	More Asian immigrants		More Asian American elected officials		More Asian American students in top universities		More spend on hate crime	More foreign Chinese students
	Lucid (1)	Dynata (2)	Lucid (3)	Dynata (4)	Lucid (5)	Dynata (6)	Lucid (7)	Dynata (8)
MMS	.04***	.05***	.06***	.06***	.07***	.07***	.05***	.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.005)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Symbolic racism	-.06***	-.03***	-.07***	-.05***	-.02**	-.03***	-.08***	-.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Fiscal conservatism	-.03***	-.03***	-.02***	-.02**	-.03***	-.02***	-.05***	-.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.005)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Independent	-.02	-.03	-.04**	-.06***	-.01	-.05**	-.04**	-.05**
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)
Republican	-.05**	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.03	-.02	-.05*
	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Ideology	-.01	-.01	-.02**	-.01*	-.004	-.01	-.02***	-.03**
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010
Adjusted R^2	.20	.16	.21	.20	.13	.17	.23	.23

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. Key covariates shown in the table are standardized for easier comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table A.7: AAR, MMS, and support for racialized public policies

	More Asian immigrants		More Asian American elected officials		More Asian American students in top universities		More spend on hate crime	More foreign Chinese students
	Lucid (1)	Dynata (2)	Lucid (3)	Dynata (4)	Lucid (5)	Dynata (6)	Lucid (7)	Dynata (8)
AAR	-.02***	-.02**	-.04***	-.03***	-.01	-.01	-.03***	.0003
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
MMS	.05***	.05***	.06***	.07***	.07***	.07***	.05***	.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.005)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Symbolic racism	-.05***	-.03***	-.05***	-.04***	-.02**	-.02**	-.07***	-.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Fiscal conservatism	-.04***	-.03***	-.03***	-.03***	-.03***	-.03***	-.05***	-.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.005)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Independent	-.03*	-.03	-.05***	-.06***	-.01	-.05**	-.04**	-.05*
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)
Republican	-.05***	-.01	-.02	-.02	-.01	-.03	-.02	-.05*
	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Ideology	-.01	-.01	-.01*	-.02*	-.004	-.02*	-.02**	-.03**
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010
Adjusted R^2	.20	.16	.24	.21	.13	.17	.24	.23

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. Key covariates shown in the table are standardized for easier comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table A.8: Combinations of AAR and MMS and support for racialized public policies

	More Asian immigrants		More Asian American elected officials		More Asian American students in top universities		More spend on hate crime	More foreign Chinese students
	Lucid (1)	Dynata (2)	Lucid (3)	Dynata (4)	Lucid (5)	Dynata (6)	Lucid (7)	Dynata (8)
High MMS, low AAR	.03*	.02	.07***	.08***	.11***	.06***	.07***	.02
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)
Low MMS, high AAR	-.11***	-.13***	-.11***	-.13***	-.02	-.12***	-.09***	-.09**
	(.02)	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)
High MMS, high AAR	.004	.05*	.02	.08***	.11***	.10***	.04*	.06**
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Symbolic racism	-.04***	-.03***	-.05***	-.04***	-.01	-.02**	-.07***	-.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Fiscal conservatism	-.04***	-.03***	-.03***	-.03***	-.03***	-.03***	-.05***	-.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Independent	-.03*	-.03	-.05***	-.06***	-.01	-.05**	-.04**	-.05**
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)
Republican	-.05**	-.003	-.02	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.02	-.05*
	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Ideology	-.01	-.02*	-.02**	-.02*	-.004	-.02*	-.02**	-.03***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Demographic controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010
Adjusted R^2	.19	.14	.20	.18	.09	.14	.22	.22

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. Key covariates shown in the table are standardized for easier comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table A.9: AAR, MMS, and support for African American racial policies

	More federal assistance to African Americans		Preferential hiring of African Americans		Affirmative action for African American students	
	Lucid (1)	Dynata (2)	Lucid (3)	Dynata (4)	Lucid (5)	Dynata (6)
Symbolic racism	-.11***	-.10***	-.10***	-.08***	-.10***	-.08***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
AAR	.002	.001	.02**	.01	.02**	.002
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
MMS	.04***	.03***	.03***	.02**	.03***	.01
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Fiscal conservatism	-.09***	-.11***	-.09***	-.12***	-.10***	-.13***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Independent	-.05***	-.005	-.03	.01	-.03*	-.02
	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)
Republican	-.02	-.02	-.01	-.04	-.03	-.02
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Ideology	-.003	-.01	-.002	-.003	-.0005	-.004
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Education	.001	-.001	-.003	-.002	-.002	-.002
	(.004)	(.01)	(.004)	(.01)	(.004)	(.01)
Male	-.01	.005	-.01	.003	-.01	-.02
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Black	.02	.04*	.04**	.02	.03	.03
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Hispanic	.02	-.02	.04	-.02	.02	-.01
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Age	-.01**	-.001*	-.02***	-.002***	-.02***	-.002***
	(.003)	(.0004)	(.003)	(.0005)	(.003)	(.0005)
Income	.002	-.01	-.002	-.01	-.0003	-.01
	(.003)	(.004)	(.003)	(.005)	(.003)	(.005)
N	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010	1,847	1,010
Adjusted R^2	.38	.40	.34	.38	.37	.38

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. Key covariates shown in the table are standardized for easier comparison of effect sizes.* $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Demographics

(Age) How old are you?*

- 18 to 24 years
- 25 to 34 years
- 35 to 44 years
- 45 to 54 years
- 55 to 64 years
- Age 65 or older

For the Dynata survey, the question was answered with an open-ended response.

(Race) What is your race?

- White
- Black or African American
- Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Other: please specify

(Gender) What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

(Income) What was your total household income before taxes during the past 12 months?

- Less than $24,999
- $25,000 to $34,999
- $35,000 to $49,999
- $50,000 to $74,999
- $75000 to $99,999
- $100,000 to $149,999
- $150,000 or more

(Employment status) What is your employment status?

- Working (paid employee)
- Working (self-employed)
- Not working (temporarily laid off)
- Not working (Looking for a job)
- Retired
- Student
- Homemaker
- Other

(Education level) What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

- o Less than high school
- o High school graduate
- o Some college, no degree
- o 2-year college degree
- o 4-year college degree
- o Postgraduate degree (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, etc)

Dispositional covariates

(Social dominance orientation) Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with below statements
(1="Strongly agree" – 5="Strongly disagree")

- To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on other groups.
- It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.
- If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems.
- Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.
- We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.
- No one group should dominate in society.
- Group equality should be our ideal.

(White racial identity) How important is being White to your identity?

- o Extremely important
- o Very important
- o Moderately important
- o Slightly important
- o Not at all important

(Party identification) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a …

- o Strong Democrat
- o Democrat
- o Independent, but lean Democrat
- o Independent
- o Independent, but lean Republican
- o Republican
- o Strong Republican

Table A.10: Survey questions, continued

(Political ideology) Thinking about politics these days, how would you describe your political viewpoint?

- o Very liberal
- o Liberal
- o Slightly liberal
- o Moderate
- o Slightly conservative
- o Conservative
- o Very conservative

(Financial stress) How worried are you about your/your family's current financial situation?

- o Extremely worried
- o Very worried
- o Moderately worried
- o A little worried
- o Not at all worried

(Fiscal conservatism) Please indicate whether you would like to see the following "increased," "stay the same," or "decreased" (1="Increased a lot" – 5="Decreased a lot")

- The federal government's role in the American economy.

(Self-Monitoring Scale*)

- When you're with other people, how often do you put on a show to impress or entertain them? (Never – Once in a while – About half the time – Most of the time – Always)
- How good or bad of an actor would you be? (Very poor – Poor – Fair – Good – Excellent)
- When you're in a group of people, how often are you the center of attention? (Never – Once in a while – About half the time – Most of the time – Always)

*This question was included in the Lucid survey only

Racial attitudes

(Racial stereotypes*) Choose a number between 1 and 7 on which the characteristics about different groups of people in American society can be rated.

Where would you rate (Whites/Blacks/Hispanics/Asians) in general on this scale?

1=(Peaceful/Lazy/Not intelligent/Not trustworthy) – 7=(Violent/Hardworking/Intelligent/Trustworthy)

*This question was included in the Dynata survey only.

Table A.10: Survey questions, continued

(Symbolic racism/racial resentment scale) Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with below statements (1="strongly agree" – 7="strongly disagree")

- Irish, Italians, Jews, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.
- Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class.
- Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve.
- It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as Whites.

(Racial feeling thermometer) Please choose between 0 and 100 to express how you feel about particular groups of people in our society.
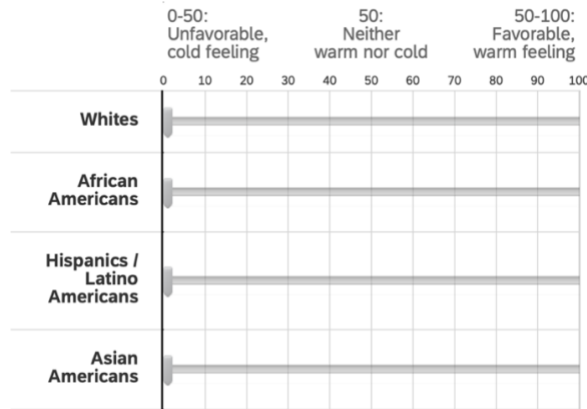
Public policies

(Asian American policies) Please indicate whether you would like to see the following "increased," "stay the same," or "decreased" (1="Increased a lot" – 5="Decreased a lot")

- Immigrants from Asia.
- Asian Americans elected in public offices.
- Federal spending on addressing anti-Asian hate crimes.*
- Chinese students studying in the U.S.**
- Asian American students admitted to top (e.g., Ivy League) universities.

*This question was included in the Lucid survey only.
**This question was included in the Dynata survey only.

(African American policies) Please indicate whether you would like to see the following "increased," "stay the same," or "decreased" (1="Increased a lot" – 5="Decreased a lot")

- Federal spending on programs that assist African Americans.
- Preferential hiring and promotion of African Americans in jobs.
- Affirmative action for African Americans in college admissions.
- The federal government's role in the American economy.

CHAPTER 3 ANTI-ASIAN RACISM AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY PUBLIC OPINION

3.1 Introduction

The recent dramatic surge in anti-Asian hate crimes in the United States following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic (Gover, Harper, and Langton 2020; Tavernise and Oppel 2020) has exposed two under-examined, yet increasingly salient, dimensions of contemporary American politics. First, it demonstrates the persistence of old-fashioned racism against Asian Americans who, despite the seemingly positive model minority stereotypes, have long been marginalized as "perpetual foreigners" in American society. Perceived as economically competent yet culturally unassimilable, Asians have repeatedly become vulnerable to racial violence and discrimination in American history, dating back to the Chinese Exclusion Act in the late 19th century (Le Espiritu 1992; Kim 1999; Wu 2002). Second, the concurrent rise of anti-*Asian* and anti-*China* sentiments amidst U.S.-China conflicts over the pandemic and other geopolitical disputes (Silver, Devlin, and Huang 2020; Russell and Lee 2021) suggests that racial considerations may still play an important role in the formation and expression of mass foreign policy attitudes toward China – an Asian power that has historically been viewed through an explicitly racial lens (Tchen and Yeats 2014; Chang 2015). Similar to the emergence of the "yellow peril" discourse during Japan's economic rise in the 1980s (Le Espiritu 1992), we might be witnessing a *racialization* of American public opinion on China, whereby deepening Sino-American tensions activate such deep-rooted anti-Asian racial resentment which, in turn, exacerbates mass threat perception and garners greater support for hawkish foreign policies.

To date, however, political scientists have paid relatively little attention to the scientific inquiry of anti-Asian racism and its potential connection with foreign policy preferences of the

American public. On the one hand, only recently have scholars begun attempting to go beyond the "Black-White binary" in the race scholarship and examine racism against ethnic and racial minorities other than African Americans (Jardina 2019; Stephens-Dougan 2021). The literature, as a result, lacks a shared measure of anti-Asian racism, without which it is difficult to empirically assess the structure and political effects of racialized views toward the minority population. Scholars of International Relations, on the other hand, have long sidestepped the role of race and racism in international politics and dismissed them as purely domestic issues – a practice that came to be known as the 'norm against noticing' in IR (Vitalis 2000). Against this background, scholars have yet to produce systematic evidence on whether *and* how anti-Asian racial sentiments factor into the formation of mass American foreign policy preferences vis-à-vis China.

To fill this gap, in this chapter I first propose a general theoretical framework that helps advance our understanding of the connection between domestic racial attitudes and foreign policy preferences, focusing on how racial hierarchy and norms closely interact with great power competition in international politics. Specifically, I propose that great power rivalry, especially under the condition of a shifting balance of power, can activate racial prejudice and animus against the subordinate challenger, exacerbating threat perception and boosting hawkish policy preferences within the dominant state. I apply the key insights of the general framework to the case of contemporary U.S.-China relations and derive hypotheses on the relationships between racialized views toward Asians on the one hand and American foreign policy attitudes toward China on the other. Next, I employ the new measures of racial attitudes introduced in the previous chapter, namely the Asian American resentment (AAR) and the model minority stereotype (MMS) scales, to show that the two prominent racial tropes play an important role in shaping mass foreign policy views on China. In Study 1, I utilize five original national surveys to demonstrate that anti-

Asian racial resentment, as measured by AAR, stands out as one of the most powerful predictors of American public support for hardline China policies. I further show that such racial attitude effects on policy preferences are significantly mediated by heightened threat perception vis-à-vis China. In Study 2, I present findings from a follow-up survey that includes both AAR and MMS as well as a range of additional questions measuring support for foreign policies toward other Asian countries. I find that the model minority trope, as measured by MMS, also has its own distinct effects on foreign policy preferences: Reflecting the ostensibly positive view of Asian people, it is associated with greater mass support for *friendly* Asian countries. Interestingly, when it comes to countries posing economic or military threats such as China, the racialized view significantly predicts higher levels of support for hawkish foreign policies in the region. Taken together, the findings suggest that individual-level racial attitudes exert substantial effects on the formulation and expression of American public opinion on China today.

The chapter proceeds as follows. In the next two sections, I introduce a generalized framework on racial hierarchy and great power relations in international politics and provide a theoretical discussion of the connection between anti-Asian racism and China policy preferences, from which I derive my working hypotheses. Next, I present findings from a series of original national surveys that demonstrate the effects of anti-Asian racial resentment on American public support for hawkish China policies (Study 1) and the role the model minority trope plays in shaping mass foreign policy preferences (Study 2). Finally, I wrap up the paper by examining the limitations of my study and discussing potentially fruitful research avenues on the intersection of anti-Asian racism, American politics, and American foreign relations with China.
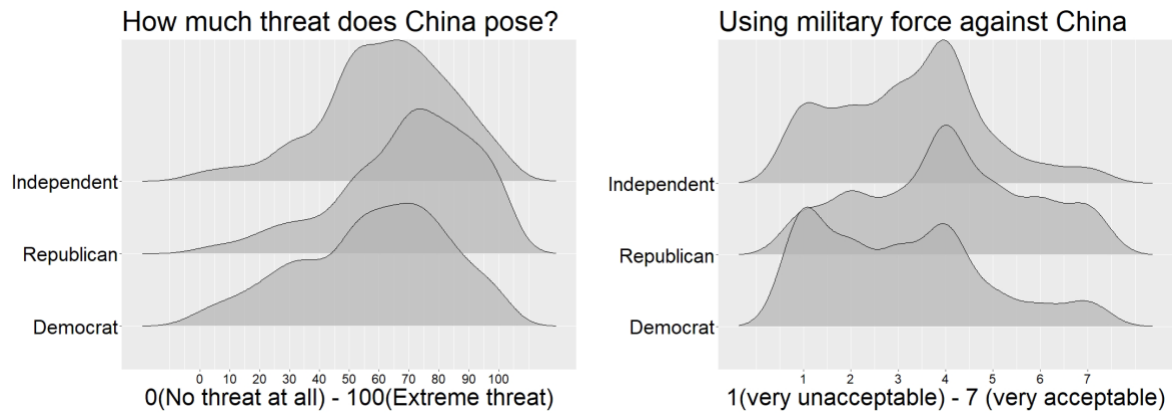
Figure 3.1: Distribution of American public opinion on China by party identification

Note: Density plots by party affiliation for responses to questions on China, using data from an original national survey field in February 2020 (Survey 1). A standard 0-100 sliding scale was used for the question "How much threat do you think China poses to the U.S.? Choose a number between 0 (No threat at all) and 100 (Extreme threat." A 7-point scale ranging from "Very unacceptable" to "Very acceptable" was used for the question "In your opinion, how acceptable or unacceptable is it for the U.S. to take the following actions?: Using military force against China." For party identification, "No preference" and "Other" were excluded from the analysis.

3.2 Racialization of American Opinion on China: Theory and Hypotheses

What determines American public opinion and foreign policy views toward China – America's most outstanding geopolitical challenger today whose economic and military power have grown drastically over the past few decades? **Figure 3.1** above shows that while Democrats on average express notably more dovish foreign policy views, there exists substantial heterogeneity in American views of China even within co-partisans. In this paper, I propose that racial attitudes are one of the most prominent, yet grossly overlooked, factors that explain the level and variation in American public support for hardline China policies. Specifically, I argue that racialized views toward Asians should play an important role in shaping how Americans interpret the actions and strategic intention of China, which has repeatedly been viewed as a racial threat – the "yellow peril" – in the history of American foreign policy (Tchen and Yeats 2014; Chang 2015).

3.2.1   Race and hierarchy in international politics

To explain the racialization of American opinion on China requires a deeper understanding of how race and racism figure in the dynamics of international politics in general and great power relations in particular. Recent studies on international hierarchy in IR have opened the door for theorizing race as a prominent force that shapes and sustains inter-state relations that are often hierarchical in nature (Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022). In world politics, many powerful states have succeeded in translating their superior material capabilities into *inter-state hierarchies*, defined as an ordered ranking of states "organized into vertical relations of super- and subordination" (Zarakol 2017, 1). As with any form of political authority, however, inter-state hierarchy demands legitimacy (Lake 2010) and as Freeman, Kim, and Lake (2022) point out, racial norms have frequently served to justify such an unequal order as a rightful rule of one superior race over the other. Dominant actors in international politics, in other words, tend to perceive the subordinate state as racially inferior yet potentially dangerous – a view that legitimates and thus helps maintain a hierarchical international order at any given time.

These notions of deficiency and hostility of racial others, therefore, straddle a key feature of racialized inter-state hierarchy and can have lasting effects on how dominant states perceive and ultimately respond to subordinate states (Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022). In IR, a few studies have demonstrated the far-reaching foreign policy implications of such racialized views: Maass (2020), for example, shows that the limited American territorial expansion in Mexico in the 19th century was due primarily to American perception of the native population as racially inferior, hostile, and therefore inherently ineligible for republican governance. Similarly, Hemmer and Katzenstein (2002) explain the absence of a NATO-like multilateral security community in Asia with the beliefs of postwar American foreign policy elites that Asians are both racially inferior and

untrustworthy, better suited for bilateral alliances instead. Racial hierarchy, in short, can shape foreign policies by conditioning how dominant actors conceive of their interests, interpret the identity and interests of racial others, and act accordingly.

3.2.2 Racialized views toward Asians and China policy preferences

The perception of racial others as inferior yet inherently dangerous can have most palpable effects on the foreign policy views and actions of dominant states in the face of challenges to their status by *rising* powers. Sociological and psychological studies suggest that racial prejudice is activated by perceived competition with subordinate racial others who challenge the status quo hierarchy (Bobo 1999; see also Blumer 1958). The long tradition of social dominance theory also attributes the source of racial prejudice and violence to the human predisposition to maintain group-based social hierarchies (Sidanius and Pratto 1999).

In the context of international politics, rising great powers pose a fundamental challenge to international hierarchy by disrupting the existing balance of power and thus can trigger racialized fears and foreign policy aggression from currently dominant states. As Adler-Nissen and Zarakol (2021) note, today's challenge to the postwar liberal international order partly comes from rising non-Western powers such as China who seek to redress their grievances against what they perceive to be a Western-centric, and thus white-dominant, global order. Such geopolitical challenges, accordingly, would stimulate anti-Asian racial prejudice and animus within dominant Western powers, giving rise to inflated threat perception and heightened preferences for hawkish foreign policies.
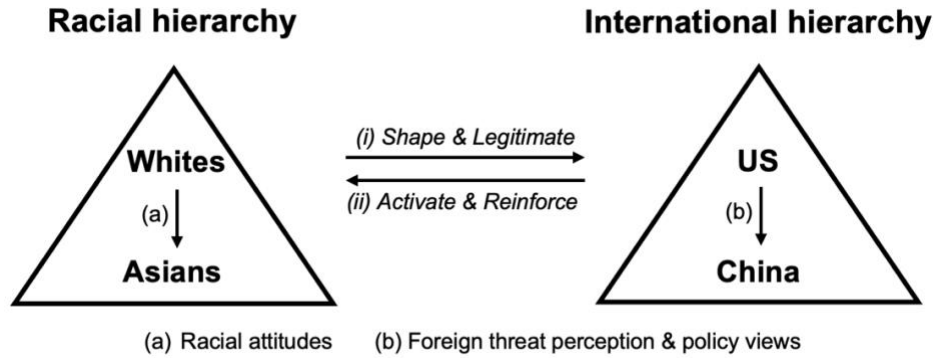
Figure 3.2: Racial hierarchy and American views of China: a theoretical framework

    Figure 3.2 visually summarizes this dynamic interaction between racial and international hierarchies as applied to the case of contemporary Sino-American relations: As far as the U.S.-led global order has at least partly been shaped and sustained by white-dominant racial hierarchy, China's rise as a hegemonic challenger would activate deep-seated anti-Asian sentiments within the United States, which can significantly shape American foreign policy views and responses (also see Búzás 2021). Racialized views toward Asians, therefore, may work as a powerful heuristic or cognitive short-cut in shaping how Americans interpret and respond to threats from China. As scholars of Asian American politics have pointed out, ordinary Americans tend to subscribe to an essentialist view of Asians as a homogeneous racial group regardless of their nationality – the process of 'racial lumping' that further facilitates the translation of racial attitudes to views toward foreign Asian countries such as China (Kim 1999; Wu 2002).

    In the United States, one key dimension of anti-Asian sentiments revolves around the view of Asians as "perpetual foreigners" perceived as "both unfit for and uninterested in the American way of life" (Kim 1999, 112). Dating back to the 19th century portrayal of "Chinamen" in the mysterious and cunning image of Fu Manchu (Mayer 2013; Tchen and Yeats 2014), Asians have been regarded as generally inscrutable and suspicious outsiders. This image has been rendered

even more threatening by the second, complementary dimension of anti-Asian racial resentment: the perception of Asians as "unbeatable competitors" (Smith 1993). Since the days of the Chinese Exclusion Act in the 19th century, as Smith (1993) notes, the presumed relative economic superiority and competence of Asians have been a major source of anti-Asian racial fear and animosity. Such entrenched racial resentment held by the American public should therefore trigger more alarmist views about the economic and military rise of China, induce the inference of hostile Chinese intensions, and lead accordingly to higher levels of mass support for hawkish foreign policy responses. Based on the discussion thus far, I derive the following testable hypotheses:

> **Hypothesis 1** (*H1*): Higher levels of anti-Asian sentiments will be positively associated with higher levels of support for hawkish China policies.

> **Hypothesis 2** (*H2*): The racial attitude effects will be mediated by heightened threat perceptions.

3.3 Study 1

3.3.1 Research design

In Study 1, I test my hypotheses with five different original surveys fielded throughout 2020: (1) Lucid (February; $N = 923$), (2) Lucid (March; $N = 1,906$), (3) MTurk (May; $N = 359$), (4) Lucid (May; $N = 1,852$), and (5) YouGov (October; $N = 928$). The purpose of the study is to demonstrate the effects of anti-Asian racial resentment, as measured by AAR, on public support for hardline China policies (*H1*) and the mediating role of threat perception (*H2*), with diverse national samples and different time periods. Previous studies have established the internal and

external validity of scientific research conducted with the above survey platforms (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012; Coppock and McClellan 2019). Furthermore, I complement MTurk's online convenience samples with more diverse and representative samples from Lucid and YouGov, which better approximate the key demographics of the U.S. population (see **Table B.1** in the appendix for a summary of sample characteristics). As with the previous chapter, I include all respondents who identified as white, black, or Hispanic/Latino Americans and below I show that the effects of anti-Asian sentiments on China policy preferences remain largely unchanged across all racial subgroups.

Table 3.1: The 5-item Asian American resentment (AAR) scale

Item No.		Factor 1
	Eigenvalue:	2.578
AAR_Competitive	Asian Americans are often overly competitive for their success.	0.727
AAR_Job	Asian Americans make the job market too competitive.	0.810
AAR_Education	When it comes to education, Asian Americans strive to achieve too much.	0.739
AAR_Value	Asian Americans need to embrace American values more.	0.673
AAR_Language	It is annoying when Asian Americans speak in their own languages in public places.	0.628
	Cronbach's alpha:	0.836

Each survey in Study 1 contains the AAR scale and a battery of China policy opinion questions, my primary independent and dependent variables of interest. For Study 1, I employ a *5-item* version AAR scale, which adds the following item to the 4-item version AAR scale developed in the previous chapter: "*Asian Americans make the job market too competitive.*" As with the 4-item version, all item statements were answered with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree." **Table 3.1** summarizes the wordings of the 5-item AAR scale and results from an exploratory factor analysis using data from the first survey, which

shows the scale's strong reliability and internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .84 and all

five items significantly loading onto the first factor. To further validate the scale, I conducted a

confirmatory factor analysis to assess the goodness of fit of the single factor model: As shown in

Table B.2 in the appendix, the data suggests adequate model fit (*CFI* = .942; *SRMR* = .049;

RMSEA = .149), which is replicated with data from the other four surveys.

I adopted the China policy questionnaire from Myrick (2019), asking about the extent to

which survey respondents find the following U.S. actions against China acceptable: (1) Increasing

economic sanctions, (2) Using covert action to influence China's politics, (3) Threatening the use

of military force, and (4) Using military force. Following the original questionnaire, each item was

answered with a 7-point scale ranging from "*Very acceptable*" to "*Very unacceptable*." To

measure levels of perceived threats from China, I administered two 0-100 scale slider items with

higher numbers indicating greater perceived threats and more hostile intentions of China. As

placebo outcome measures, I also included a set of foreign policy questions on issues that are

unrelated to China, ranging from providing foreign aid to Africa to increasing spending on

counterterrorism. These questions allow me to make sure that anti-Asian sentiments matter

specifically for attitudes toward China and do not simply correlate with or stand for general foreign

policy conservatism.

In addition, in order to ensure that any effect of the AAR scale does not stem from the

influence of general racial conservatism or ethnocentric sentiments, I included a comprehensive

set of other racial resentment scales developed in the literature: symbolic racism (Kinder and Sears

1981; Kinder and Sanders 1996), Muslim American resentment (Lajevardi and Abrajano 2019;

Lajevardi 2020), and Latino ethno-racial resentment (Sergio and Ocampo 2020). I also

administered the racial favorability (feeling thermometer) scale and racial stereotype measures to

test if the AAR scale better predicts China policy preferences than these previous measures of racial attitudes. The remainder of the control variables consists of standard demographics and the conventional predictors of foreign policy preferences – partisanship, ideology, and baseline hawkishness.[11] **Tables B.10** and **B.11** in the appendix summarize the list of all variables in each survey and full question wordings.

Table 3.2: Effects of Asian American resentment on support for use of force against China

	Feb 2020 Lucid (1)	Mar 2020 Lucid (2)	May 2020 MTurk (3)	May 2020 Lucid (4)	Oct 2020 YouGov (5)
Asian American resentment	**.10***	**.07***	**.14***	**.05***	**.07***
	(.01)	**(.01)**	**(.02)**	**(.01)**	**(.01)**
Favorability toward Asians	.02	-.02**		-.02**	-.01
	(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	(.01)
Stereotype: *violent*	.01	.01		.03***	
	(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	
Stereotype: *hardworking*	-.01	-.02*		-.01	
	(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	
Stereotype: *intelligent*	-.04***	-.01		-.01	
	(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	
Stereotype: *untrustworthy*	-.0004	.01		.01	
	(.01)	(.01)		(.01)	
Constant	.39***	.33***	.48***	.39***	.19***
	(.04)	(.03)	(.07)	(.03)	(.04)
Demographic Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	849	1,762	376	1,633	633
Adjusted R^2	.22	.20	.37	.19	.36

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. AAR, favorability, and stereotype scales are standardized for comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

3.3.2 Findings

Table 3.2 displays the results of my main analyses, which provide strong supporting evidence for my first hypothesis (*H1*). The ordinary least square (OLS) estimates indicate that a

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[11] I utilize the military assertiveness scale widely employed in IR to capture general foreign policy hawkishness (see Yarhi-Milo, Kertzer, and Renshon 2018).

unit increase in the expressed level of anti-Asian sentiments, as captured by the AAR scale, predicts approximately 5 to 14 percentage points increase in the average support for the use of military force against China across all five surveys ($p<.001$ in all models). The results, as shown in the table, are robust to controlling for standard demographics, party identification, and political ideology. Note that the shown models also account for the effects of other existing measures of racial attitudes toward Asian Americans – the racial favorability (feeling thermometer) and racial stereotype scales. Across all models, AAR is found to be the sole predictor of China policy preferences, consistently reaching statistical significance with substantial effect sizes. This result suggests that the AAR scale performs better at capturing the specific contents of anti-Asian racial resentment *and* has greater predictive power in terms of foreign policy preferences than these previous measures of racial attitudes.
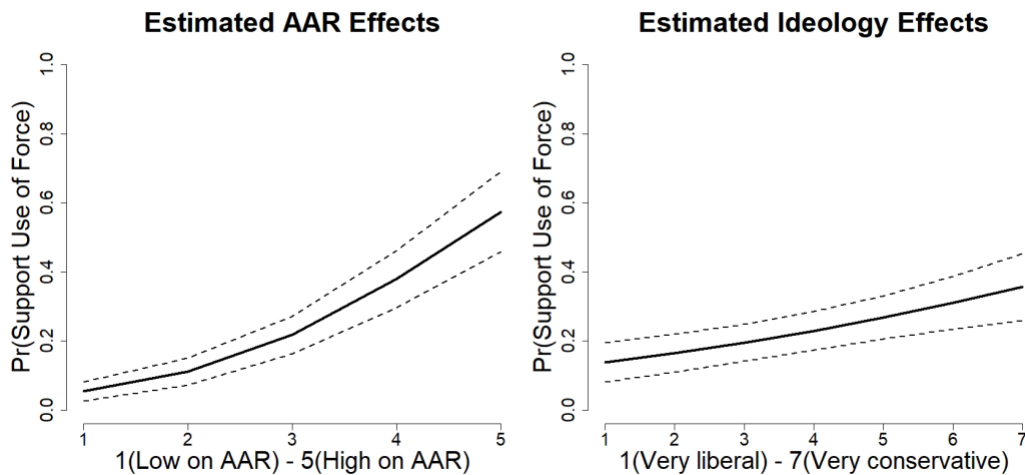
Figure 3.3: Marginal effects of AAR vs. political ideology on support for use of force against China

In **Table B.4** in the appendix, I expand the dependent variables to the entire China policy questionnaire, using data from Survey 1. Similarly, I find that a unit increase in the AAR scale

predicts about 6 to 10 percentage-points increase in the average support for hawkish China policies. Also importantly, the results indicate that the size of the AAR effect is consistently comparable to or larger than that of party identification and political ideology, two of the most outstanding conventional predictors of foreign policy preferences (Wittkopf 1990; Rathbun 2014). To ease the comparison of effect sizes, I calculated the marginal effects of AAR and ideology on support for the use of military force against China, as displayed in **Figure 3.3**. The left panel shows that there is less than 10% chance that an average American[12] with the lowest score on AAR will support use of force while the probability rises up to 60% for the highest level of anti-Asian sentiment. This change is more dramatic than the shift in predicted probabilities of supporting military action for different levels of ideological leanings (see the right panel), suggesting that anti-Asian sentiment factors substantially more strongly into American attitudes toward China than political ideology.

Next, I conducted a causal mediation analysis using the methodology proposed by Imai et al. (2011) to formally test my second hypothesis that heightened threat perception would mediate the effects of anti-Asian sentiments on support for hardline China policies (*H2*). **Table 3.4** reports the results of the causal mediation analysis, using $N = 1,000$ simulations and the two measures of threat perception as potential mediators. As indicated by the positive and statistically significant estimates of average causal mediation effects (ACME), we see that higher levels of perceived threat from China indeed mediate the effect of AAR on foreign policy preferences. In other words, individuals who embrace more negative views of Asian Americans are more likely to believe that

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[12] A white female, in her late 40s to early 50s, with some college education and an annual income of about 40,000 dollars who are ideologically moderate and affiliate with the Republican party.

China poses greater threats and holds more hostile intentions toward the U.S. and such beliefs, in turn, partially shape their more hawkish policy stances.
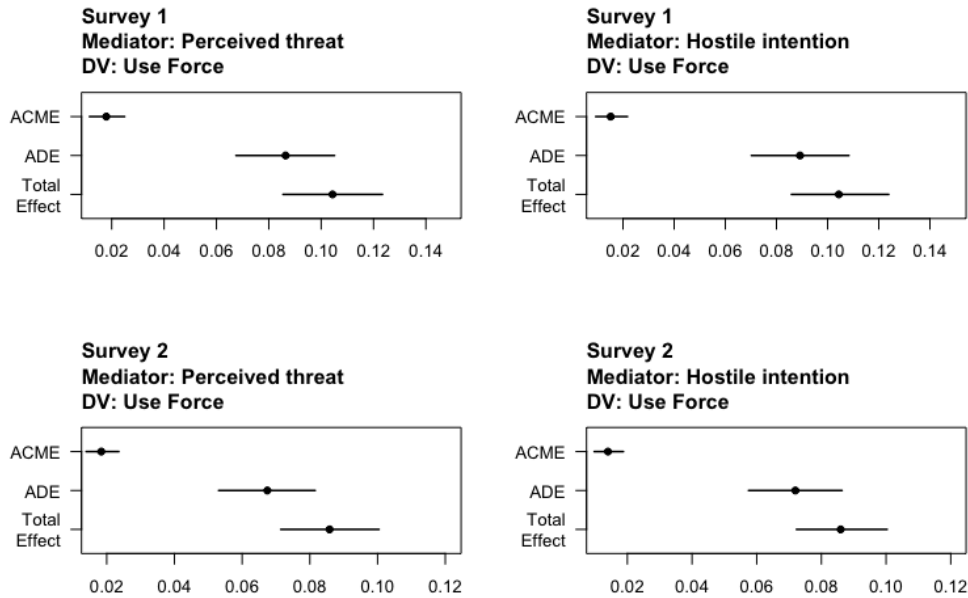
Figure 3.4: Mediating role of threat perception

As part of additional analyses, I examined whether AAR has any differential effects by race (i.e., between whites and other racial minorities) and by political ideology (i.e., between conservatives and liberals). As shown in **Table B.5** in the appendix, I find basically the same pattern for all racial subgroups across the five surveys. Despite the relatively small sample sizes of Hispanic and African American respondents, the AAR scale consistently exerts strong and statistically significant effects on support for hawkish China policies. I additionally find that both Hispanic and African American participants score on the AAR scale as high as their white counterparts across all surveys (e.g., $M = 3.09$, $SD = .95$ for white Americans, $M = 3.13$, $SD = .94$ for African Americans, $M = 3.10$, $SD = .93$ for Hispanic Americans in Survey 1). The data thus

indicates that racial and ethnic minorities not only embrace anti-Asian sentiments as readily as white Americans but also tend to exhibit a similar level of racialized views toward China.

I also find that anti-Asian sentiments matter significantly more for liberals than conservatives in shaping foreign policy attitudes toward China. As shown in **Figure B.1** in the appendix, liberal respondents who score low on AAR exhibit less hawkish China policy preferences than their conservative counterparts – those who are supposed to back up firm foreign policy preferences out of "principled conservatism," regardless of their racial beliefs (Sniderman and Carmines 1999). Liberals who score high on AAR, however, are shown to support hardline China policies at a comparable or even a greater level than conservatives with the same level of anti-Asian sentiments. In other words, in accordance with the findings of Sniderman and Carmines (1999), racial animus appears to have a more pronounced role in shaping political thinking of liberals than conservatives, in terms, in this case, of foreign policy views toward the Asian country. Taken together, the above findings suggest that anti-Asian feelings could been an effective mobilizing force across otherwise divisive racial and ideological lines in garnering public support for conflictual policies against China.

Thus far, the evidence demonstrates a strong positive association between anti-Asian sentiment and American support for hawkish foreign policies on China. One potential issue is that the racial attitude effect may arise from the relationship between a broader ethnocentric inclination and general out-group aggression. Ethnocentrism, a generalized denigration of outgroups, has been found to predict preferences on a wide range of policy issues including the War on Terror (Kinder and Kam 2010). To address the possibility that ethnocentric attitudes, instead of racialized views toward Asians in particular, explains my findings, I ran additional regression models that control

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for a measure of ethnocentrism.[13] **Table B.6** in the appendix shows that the AAR effect remains significant and substantively large after accounting for the influence of ethnocentrism. All the models in the table also control for measures of resentment against other racial minorities, further ensuring that particularized attitudes toward Asians, not general racial conservatism, predict American views of China.

In order to ensure that anti-Asian racial resentment does not simply correlate with general foreign policy conservatism, I ran a series of placebo tests with non-China foreign policy questions from Survey 4 as outcome measures. As summarized in **Table B.8**, AAR has null or inconsistent effects on support for these non-China-related foreign policies. This finding once again corroborates the theoretical premise of the chapter that racialized views toward particular ethno-racial groups at home should meaningfully shape attitudes toward foreign countries with similar perceived racial characteristics. Finally, I find the robust AAR effects after controlling for military assertiveness, a measure of general foreign policy hawkishness, which further suggest that the findings do not reduce to any association between AAR and foreign policy conservatism (see **Table B.7** in the appendix).

3.4 Study 2

One important limitation of Study 1 lies in its focus on AAR as a sole predictor of American opinion on China, without accounting for the potential influence of the other core dimension of racialized views toward Asian Americans: the model minority trope. To test its potential effects

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[13] To construct the ethnocentrism scale, I follow Sides and Gross (2013) by utilizing the four racial stereotype measures administered in Surveys 1, 2, and 4. The ethnocentrism score represents the deviation between assessments of a given racial outgroup and assessments of the ingroup, averaged across all outgroups and four stereotype traits. The scale ranges from -1 and 1, with positive numbers indicating higher levels of ethnocentrism.

on foreign policy preferences, I conducted a follow-up survey that additionally includes the model minority stereotype (MMS) scale and measures of foreign policy views vis-à-vis other Asian countries.

3.4.1 Research design

For Study 2, I rely on data from one of the two surveys introduced in the previous chapter, which recruited a national sample of American adults ($N = 1,847$) in partnership with Lucid in October 2021. The survey included the 4-item AAR and MMS scales, along with symbolic racism and racial favorability scales. I also added three items from the China policy questionnaire from Study 1, measuring levels of support for increasing economic sanction, using covert military action, and using military force against China with the identical 7-point scale. Due to time constraints, the follow-up survey did not include measures of perceived threat from China. I additionally administered, however, new measures of foreign policy preferences vis-à-vis Asian allies, which first presented the following background information to survey participants: "*U.S. has maintained close relationships with Asian allies such as Japan, South Korea, and countries in Southeast Asia.*" After reading the prompt, respondents indicated the extent to which they oppose or support (1) sending more American troops to defend Asian allies, (2) lowering tariffs on imports from Asian allies, and (3) increasing foreign aid for U.S. allies in Southeast Asia, with a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly oppose" to "Strongly support." To explore whether AAR and MMS have similar influences on policy attitudes toward hostile Asian countries other than China, I also constructed measures of Japan policy preferences, which started with the following message to all respondents: "*Japan is now fiercely competing with leading American companies by manufacturing high-tech electronic components and devices. Some have accused Japan of stealing*

American technologies and now allowing a level playing field for American companies." After

priming the readers with perceived threats from China, I assessed with a 7-point scale the degree

to which they opposed or supported (1) increasing tariffs on imports from Japan, (2) imposing

economic sanction on Japan, and (3) reducing U.S. military aid to Japan. To avoid any priming

and order effects, I randomized the order of all foreign policy and racial attitude questionnaires.

Table 3.3: Effects of AAR and MMS on foreign policy preferences

	Support Asian Allies (1)	Hawkish Japan Policy (2)	Hawkish China Policy (3)	Support Asian Allies (4)	Hawkish Japan Policy (5)	Hawkish China Policy (6)
Both scales together						
AAR	.01	.07***	.06***			
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)			
MMS	.06***	.03***	.03***			
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)			
AAR x MMS						
High MMS, low AAR				.06***	.03*	.04***
				(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Low MMS, high AAR				-.03	.06**	.07***
				(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
High MMS, high AAR				.09***	.15***	.13***
				(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	1,847	1,847	1,847	1,847	1,847	1,847
Adjusted R^2	.17	.15	.18	.11	.10	.14

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. AAR and MMS are standardized for comparison of effect sizes. All models control for symbolic racism and standard demographic traits. Full results with controls can be found in the appendix. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

3.4.2 Findings

Table 3.3 displays the results of my main analysis with data from the follow-up survey. For the

analysis, I calculated composite scores for all outcome measures by averaging responses to

question items within each measure. For independent variables, I included the AAR and MMS

scales together for Models 1-3 and utilized the joint AAR and MMS dummies[14] I constructed in

the previous chapter for Models 4-6. The first three models thus display independent effects of

each racial trope on foreign policy preferences while controlling for the influence of the other

dimension of racialized views toward Asians. The last three models, on the other hand, allow us

to examine in more detail how different combinations of the two racial tropes affect mass foreign

policy views toward the Asian countries.

First, I replicate the main results from Study 1, finding that higher levels of anti-Asian

sentiment, as measured by AAR, again significantly predict more hawkish stances toward China

(Model 3). Interestingly, the data further shows that this AAR effect extends to mass support for

hardline policies against Japan, America's most valued ally in the region, when respondents are

told that the Asian country is posing a considerable strategic threat to the United States (Model 2).

I find similar results from Models 5 and 6, in which high levels of AAR significantly lead to greater

support for hawkish China *and* Japan policies. This result suggests that perceived threat from any

Asian country can significantly activate anti-Asian racial animus and result in heightened levels

of mass support for hardline policy responses. This behavioral pattern thus explains America's

well-documented alarm against Japan's formidable economic rise in the 1980s, which

accompanied growing anti-Asian hate crimes across the country (Le Espiritu 1992; Moeller 1996;

Morris 2011).

Second, I also find distinct and substantial effects of the model minority trope on the

American public's foreign policy views. Model 1 shows that a unit increase in MMS leads to about

6 percentage points increase in the average level of public support for increased military and

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[14] I divided the sample into four subgroups according to the cross-tabulation of high versus low
AAR and MMS, with a composite score greater than 3 classified as "high" for each scale.

economic aid to Asian allies that apparently present no harm to American interests. I find a similar result with Model 4, which shows that individuals with higher levels of MMS are significantly more likely to approve policies that benefit American allies in the region. In other words, the perception of Asians as a model minority appears to be significantly associated with support for pro-Asian policies in international as well as domestic contexts. At the same time, however, I find that higher MMS scores also consistently predict greater support for hardline policies toward Asian countries that pose strategic threats to the United States. In Models 2 and 3, a unit increase in MMS results in approximately 3 percentage points increase in average support for hawkish China and Japan policies, even after accounting for the influence of AAR. The model minority racial trope, in short, exerts independent effects on boosting hawkish public opinion when perceived security threat originates from an Asian country. Models 5 and 6 reveal a more interesting pattern, in which those who score high on both AAR and MMS are even more likely to support punitive actions against Japan and China. In short, Americans who subscribe to both racial tropes on Asian Americans tend to react most strongly to foreign threats from Asia.

3.5 Discussion

In this paper, I tested my argument that racialized views toward Asian Americans should explain a significant portion of American support for hardline China policies, sometimes even more so than the conventional predictors of foreign policy preferences such as party affiliation and political ideology. One primary limitation of the present paper concerns the direction of causality between racial attitudes and China policy preferences. In my theoretical discussion, I pointed out that domestic racial attitudes and foreign policy preferences should interact with each other in a *feedback loop*, with growing inter-state tensions activating pre-existing racialized views which, in

turn, would exacerbate threat perception and hawkish foreign policy opinion. Nonetheless, future research can probe and establish the causal effects of racial attitudes on foreign policy preferences. While the evidence from this paper suggests that the association between racialized views toward Asians and China policy opinion is unlikely to arise from any unaddressed confounding factors, scholars can design experimental and longitudinal studies, for example, to empirically obtain causal identification.

To assess the racialization of contemporary American views of China, in this paper I employed the new measures of Asian American racial tropes, the AAR and MMS scales, and validated their predictive values. Future research can further utilize these measures to empirically assess the role of racialized sentiments in shaping public opinion on China by different issue areas and time periods. In addition, by incorporating the new measures to multi-year (cross-)national surveys and longitudinal studies, scholars will be able to track the changing level and prevalence of racialized views toward Asians and their potential far-reaching effects on American public opinion and foreign policy.

Table 3.4: Emotional appeals in political campaign advertisements on China across all US elections from 2006 to 2018

Years	China Ads			Non-China Ads		
	% Anger	% Fear	% Sadness	% Anger	% Fear	% Sadness
2006	57.14	7.14	3.57	44.04	9.63	4.71
2010	75.00	30.98	13.04	48.36	20.32	8.12
2012	73.68	13.45	4.68	53.90	15.54	7.40
2014	70.21	17.02	6.38	50.30	13.34	7.35
2016	60.82	16.49	8.25	52.16	17.64	7.06
2018	72.60	8.22	10.96	48.25	7.99	9.99
Total	**70.83**	**18.67**	**8.67**	**49.52**	**13.89**	**7.71**

Finally, I conclude by pointing to potentially fruitful research agendas on the intersection of anti-Asian racism, American politics, and American foreign relations with China. For example,

given the salient role elite rhetoric and the mainstream media play in stoking and politicizing mass racial hatred (e.g., see Abrajano, Hajnal, and Hassell 2017; Newman et al. 2019), scholars can examine how increasingly hostile anti-China political discourses today give rise to racialized views of China *and* the further marginalization of Asians at home. **Table 3.4** summarizes my findings from the content analysis of televised political campaign advertisements[15] in the U.S., showing that political rhetoric on China have been significantly more emotionally charged than non-China messages. The data clearly shows that strategic appeals to negative emotions – anger in particular – have prevailed in American political discourses on China. More research can be conducted to investigate whether such discourses effectively provoke anti-Asian racial resentment and thereby garner heightened levels of mass support for hardline China policies (Chow 2021). Relatedly, does the political use of such explicitly racialized terms as the "Chinese virus" lead to stronger associations between anti-Asian racial animosity and negative views toward China? Do we see those effects only among those who are already racially conservative, or does it increase the level of racial hatred and racialized policy views across the board? Studies that address these questions will help advance both scholarly and broader discussions on the largely under-examined role of anti-Asian racism in shaping American racial politics and U.S.-China great power competition.

3.6 Acknowledgments

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[15] I relied on data from the Wesleyan Media Project, which included hand-coded variables on emotional appeals for each campaign advertisement. For more information on the data, see http://mediaproject.wesleyan.edu/.

3.7 Appendix

Table B.1: Targeted and actual demographic characteristics of all samples

Quota Name	Target	Survey 1 Feb 2020 Lucid	Survey 2 Mar 2020 Lucid	Survey 3 May 2020 MTurk	Survey 4 May 2020 Lucid	Survey 5 Oct 2020 YouGov	Survey 6 Oct 2021 Lucid
Age: 18-24	.13	.09	.10	.07	.12	.09	.12
Age: 25-34	.20	.19	.20	.39	.20	.17	.20
Age: 35-44	.20	.20	.20	.25	.19	.16	.19
Age: 45-64	.33	.34	.32	.24	.34	.35	.32
Age: 65-99	.14	.18	.18	.06	.15	.24	.17
Gender: Female	.51	.52	.53	.42	.52	.60	.53
Gender: Male	.49	.48	.47	.58	.48	.40	.47
Race: White	.74	.79	.79	.89	.77	.79	.78
Race: Black	.13	.13	.14	.06	.15	.13	.14
Race: Hispanic	.13	.07	.05	.08	.07	.09	.08
Region: Midwest	.20	.19	.19	.21	.19	.22	-
Region: West	.26	.23	.22	.20	.23	.18	-
Region: Northeast	.20	.23	.20	.22	.21	.40	-
Region: South	.34	.35	.39	.32	.38	.20	-
PID: Democrat	.29	.39	.38	.42	.37	.39	.45
PID: Republican	.28	.37	.36	.37	.37	.31	.25
PID: Independent	.38	.24	.25	.21	.25	.31	.29

Table B.2: Reliability of the 5-item AAR scale: confirmatory factor analysis

	Cronbach's α	χ^2	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	p-value
Survey 1	0.84	116.538	0.942	0.049	0.149	0.000
Survey 2	0.80	311.222	0.905	0.061	0.172	0.000
Survey 3	0.87	25.032	0.981	0.046	0.099	0.000
Survey 4	0.84	3907.748	0.963	0.036	0.120	0.000
Survey 5	0.86	240.392	0.899	0.061	0.218	0.000
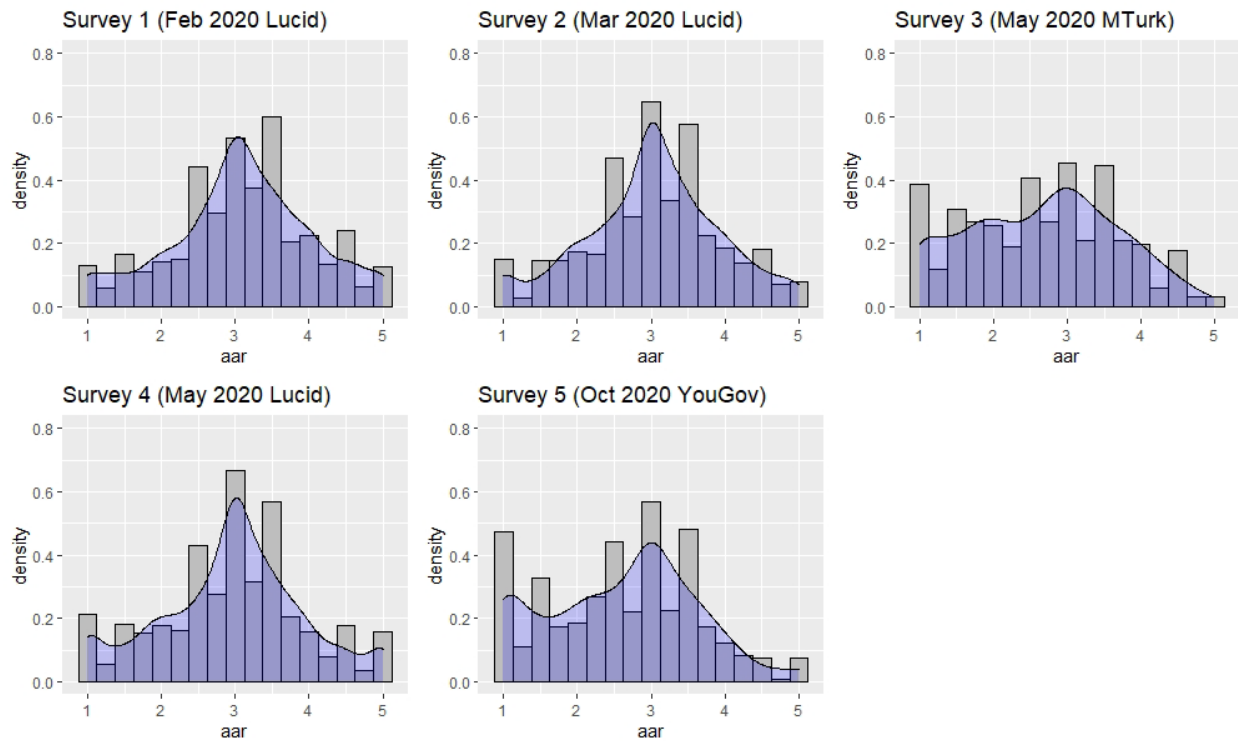
Figure B.1: Distribution of the 5-item AAR scale in Study 1

Table B.3: Effects of Asian American resentment on support for hawkish China policies

	Use force	Threat force	Covert action	Economic sanction
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Asian American resentment	.10***	.09***	.08***	.06***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
PID: Republican	.08**	.09***	.08**	.11***
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.02)
PID: Independent	.01	.02	-.004	.03
	(.02)	(.02)	(.03)	(.02)
Ideology	.01*	.02**	.01	.02**
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Gender: Male	.03	.06**	.07***	.04
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Race: Black	-.04	-.02	-.02	-.04
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Race: Hispanic	-.04	-.03	-.03	.01
	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)
Age	-.02***	-.01*	-.03***	.02**
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Income	.003	.01	.01	.002
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Education	.003	.002	.01	.02*
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Constant	.37***	.32***	.34***	.29***
	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)
N	849	849	849	849
Adjusted R^2	.20	.21	.18	.17

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses, using data from Survey 1. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. AAR, favorability, and stereotype scales are standardized for comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table B.4: AAR effects by racial subgroups

	Survey 1 Feb 2020 Lucid (1)	Survey 2 Mar 2020 Lucid (2)	Survey 3 May 2020 MTurk (3)	Survey 4 May 2020 Lucid (4)	Survey 5 Oct 2020 YouGov (5)
White Americans only					
AAR	.10***	.08***	.13***	.08***	.07***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	674	1,386	309	1,272	581
Adjusted R^2	.22	.21	.36	.19	.35
Africans Americans only					
AAR	.09***	.07***	.24**	.03	.13***
	(.03)	(.02)	(.06)	(.02)	(.02)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	118	257	21	237	92
Adjusted R^2	.08	.07	.49	.03	.52
Hispanic Americans only					
AAR	.11**	.07**	.34*	.08**	.07**
	(.04)	(.03)	(.11)	(.02)	(.02)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	57	119	17	124	62
Adjusted R^2	.14	.07	.43	.13	.37

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses, using data from Surveys 1-5. Outcome measures (support for use of force) are recoded 0-1. AAR is standardized. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.
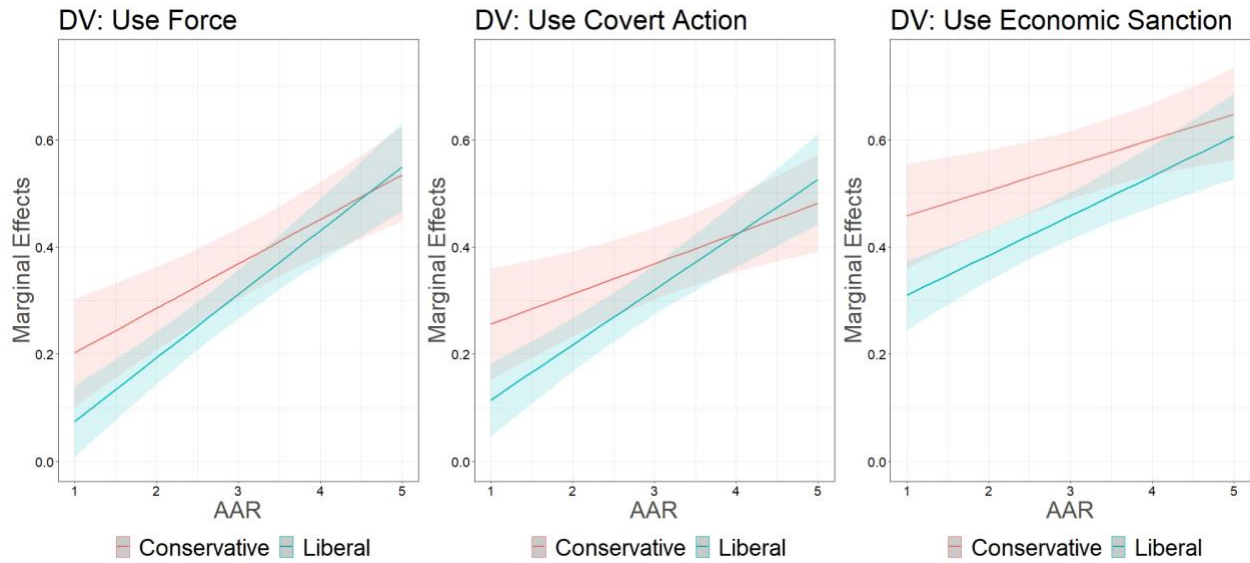
Note: The graphs show the predicted values of support for hawkish China policies at different levels of AAR by political ideology, using data from Survey 1. The 7-point ideology scale was converted to a binary variable with those who identify as "very liberal (conservative)," "liberal (conservative)," "slightly liberal (conservative)" were classified as "liberals (conservatives)." Confidence intervals are at the 95% level.

Figure B.2: Marginal effects of AAR on China policy preferences by ideology

Table B.5: AAR effects after controlling for other resentment and ethnocentrism scales

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 4
	(1)	(2)	(3)
AAR	.08***	.04***	.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Symbolic racism	.03*	.03**	.03***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Muslim resentment	.02*	.03***	
	(.01)	(.01)	
Latino resentment		.03**	.02
		(.01)	(.01)
Ethnocentrism	.01	.02**	.04***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y
N	849	1,762	1,633
Adjusted R^2	.22	.22	.20

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures (support for use of force) are recoded 0-1. AAR and other key covariates shown in the table are standardized. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table B.6: AAR effects after controlling for military assertiveness

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3	Survey 4	Survey 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
AAR	.08***	.06***	.11***	.06***	.08***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)
Military assertiveness	.08***	.09***	.10***	.09***	.02*
	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.01)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	849	1,762	347	1,633	633
Adjusted R^2	.26	.25	.43	.23	.36

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures (support for use of force) are recoded 0-1. AAR and military assertiveness scales are standardized. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table B.7: Placebo tests

	Increase spending on counterterrorism		Oppose cooperation on climate change		Support sanction on Iran		Oppose aid to Africa	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
AAR	.07	-.01	.23***	.03	.05	-.05	.27***	-.03
	(.04)	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)
Symbolic racism		.10*		.29***		.21***		.58***
		(.05)		(.05)		(.05)		(.05)
Latino resentment		.04		.21***		-.02		.20***
		(.06)		(.06)		(.06)		(.06)
Ethnocentrism		.09*		-.05		.18***		.04
		(.04)		(.05)		(.04)		(.05)
PID: Republican	.31**	.23*	.81***	.64***	.20	.07	.43***	.12
	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)
PID: Independent	.06	.01	.41***	.30**	.07	-.01	.23*	.02
	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)
Ideology	.15***	.14***	.21***	.17***	.15***	.12***	.10***	.01
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	1,633	1,633	1,633	1,633	1,633	1,633	1,633	1,633
Adjusted R^2	.11	.11	.16	.19	.14	.16	.07	.17

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses, using data from Survey 4, the only survey that contained the placebo outcome measures. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. AAR, symbolic racism, Latino resentment, and ethnocentrism scales are standardized. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table B.8: Effects of AAR and MMS on foreign policy preferences: full results

	Support Asian Allies	Hawkish Japan Policy	Hawkish China Policy	Support Asian Allies	Hawkish Japan Policy	Hawkish China Policy
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
AAR	.01	.07***	.06***			
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)			
MMS	.06***	.03***	.03***			
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)			
High MMS, low AAR				.06***	.03*	.04***
				(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Low MMS, high AAR				-.03	.06**	.07***
				(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
High MMS, high AAR				.09***	.15***	.13***
				(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Symbolic racism	-.03***	.004	.02***	-.02***	.02**	.03***
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Independent	-.04***	-.02	-.02	-.04***	-.02	-.03*
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Republican	-.03*	-.002	.03	-.04**	-.01	.02
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Ideology	-.002	-.004	.01	-.002	-.002	.01*
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Education	-.001	-.002	.01	-.001	-.003	.01
	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)
Male	.05***	-.02	.01	.05**	-.01	.01
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Black	.03*	.02	.04**	.03	.03*	.05**
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Hispanic	.01	-.001	-.02	.01	.01	-.01
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Age	-.02***	-.01	.003	-.02***	-.01	.003
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.001)
Income	.01*	.004	.01	.01*	.004	.01
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
N	1,847	1,847	1,847	1,847	1,847	1,847
Adjusted R^2	.17	.15	.18	.11	.10	.14

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. AAR and MMS are standardized for comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

Table B.9: Variables in each dataset

	Feb 2020 Lucid	Mar 2020 Lucid	May 2020 MTurk	May 2020 Lucid	Oct 2020 YouGov	Oct 2021 Lucid
Outcome Measures						
China: use force	y	y	y	y	y	y
China: threat force	y	y	y	y	n	n
China: covert action	y	y	y	y	n	y
China: econ sanction	y	y	y	y	n	y
China: threat perception I	y	y	n	n	n	n
China: threat perception II	y	y	n	n	n	n
Support for Asian allies	n	n	n	n	n	y
Hawkish Japan policy	n	n	n	n	n	y
Placebo Outcome Measures						
Counter-terrorism	n	n	n	y	n	n
Climate change	n	n	n	y	n	n
Iran sanction	n	n	n	y	n	n
Africa aid	n	n	n	y	n	n
Racial Attitude Measures						
Asian American resentment	y	y	y	y	y	y
Model minority stereotype	n	n	n	n	n	y
Symbolic racism	y	y	n	y	n	y
Muslim American resentment	y	y	n	n	n	n
Latino resentment	n	y	n	y	n	n
Racial favorability	y	y	n	y	y	y
Racial stereotype measure	y	y	n	y	n	n
Other Controls						
Military aassertiveness	y	y	y	y	y	y
Party ID	y	y	y	y	y	y
Ideology	y	y	y	y	y	y
Age	y	y	y	y	y	y
Education	y	y	y	y	y	y
Income	y	y	y	y	y	y
Race	y	y	y	y	y	y
Gender	y	y	y	y	y	y
Notes on the Data						
Sample size	923	1,906	359	1,852	928	1,847

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Table B.10: Survey questions*

*Questions that also appear in the surveys from Chapter 2 are not shown here.

China policy questionnaire

Prompt:
Today, there are increasing concerns about growing tensions between the U.S. and China on many issues including military affairs (e.g., territorial disputes in the South China Sea), cyber security, human rights, and trade relations.

In your opinion, how acceptable or unacceptable is it for the United States to take the following actions?
(Answers: 7-point scale from "Very unacceptable" to "Very acceptable")

- Increase economic sanctions against China.
- Use covert action to secretly influence China's politics.
- Threaten military force against China.
- Use military force against China.

China threat perception I

How much threat do you think China poses to the U.S.? Choose a number between 0 and 100.

| 0= No threat at all | | | | | | | | | 100= Extreme threat |

| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
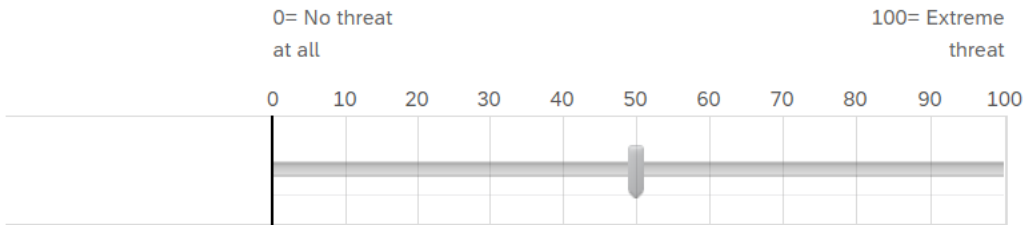
China threat perception II

What do you think is China's strategic goal in international politics? Choose a number between 0 and 100.

| 0=China has limited aims (self-defensive) | | | | | | | | | 100= China aims to undermine U.S. interest |

| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

Table B.10: Survey questions, continued

Support for Asian allies

Prompt: U.S. has maintained close relationships with Asian allies such as Japan, South Korea, and countries in Southeast Asia.

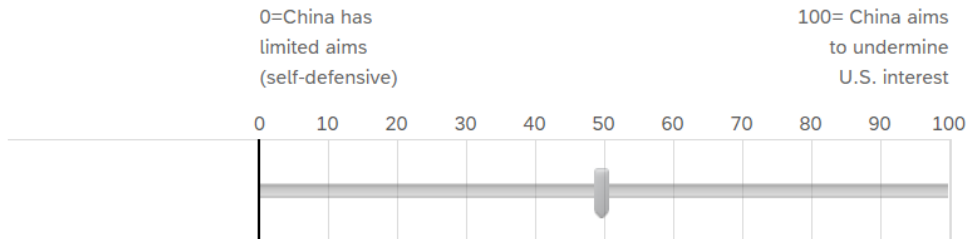Do you support or oppose following actions by the U.S. government? (answered with a 7-point Likert scale from "Strongly oppose" to "Strongly support")

- Send more American troops to defend Asian allies.
- Lower tariffs on imports from Asian allies.
- Increase foreign aid for U.S. allies in Southeast Asia.

Japan policy questionnaire

Prompt: Japan is now fiercely competing with leading American companies by manufacturing high-tech electronic components and devices. Some have accused Japan of stealing American technologies and now allowing a level playing field for American companies.

Do you support or oppose following actions by the U.S. government? (answered with a 7-point Likert scale from "Strongly oppose" to "Strongly support")

- Increase tariffs on imports from Japan.
- Increase economic sanctions on Japan.
- Reduce U.S. military aid to Japan.

Placebo foreign policy questionnaire

Do you support or oppose following policies by the U.S. government? (Answered with a 7-point Likert scale from "Strongly oppose" to "Strongly support")

- Increase military spending on fighting ISIS and other terrorist organizations in the Middle East.
- Abide by international agreements on global climate change.
- Pressure Iran with economic and military sanctions until it gives up its nuclear program.
- Increase economic aid to poor countries in Africa.

Military assertiveness

Following three-item military assertiveness scale was administered to measure baseline hawkishness, building on recent IR studies on foreign policy orientations (e.g., Yarhi-Milo, Kertzer, and Renshon 2018).

Do you agree or disagree with following statements? (Answered with a 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree")

- Going to war is unfortunate, but sometimes the only solution to international problems.
- The use of military force only makes problems worse (reverse-coded).
- The only way to ensure world peace is through America's military strength.

Latino American resentment scale

Following seven items were adopted from Sergio and Ocampo (2020).

Do you agree or disagree with following statements? (Answered with a 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree")

- Generation after generation Latinos continue to have strong attachments to their country of origin.
- Most Latinos in our country today want to adopt American customs and way of life (*reverse-coded*).
- The distinct nature of Latino culture and traditions enriches American culture for the better (*reverse-coded*).
- Even after several generations in America, Latinos continue to have a tendency to get involved in gangs and organized crimes.
- Latinos rely on social welfare programs to maintain their families.
- Latinos don't value education and oftentimes end up dropping out of high school.
- Over the past few years, Latinos have gotten more economically than they deserve.

Muslim American resentment scale

Following six items were adopted from Lajevardi and Abrajano (2019).

Do you agree or disagree with following statements? (Answered with a 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree")

- Most Muslim Americans integrate successfully into American culture (*reverse-coded*).
- Muslim Americans sometimes do not have the best interests of Americans at heart.
- Muslims living in the United States should be subject to more surveillance than others.
- Most Muslim Americans reject jihad and violence (*reverse-coded*).
- Muslim Americans do a good job of speaking out against Islamic terrorism (reverse-coded).

CHAPTER 4 ANTI-ASIAN RACISM AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY PUBLIC OPINION

4.1 Introduction

Amidst deteriorating U.S.-China relations, only exacerbated by the recent diplomatic war of words over the origin of the pandemic and Trump's repeated invocations of the "Chinese virus," there has been an exponential growth in racial violence and hate crimes against people of Asian descent in the United States (Russell 2020; Tavernise and Oppel 2020). Both pundits and activists, accordingly, have begun to examine the intimate connection between anti-Asian racism and the deepening U.S.-China rivalry, focusing mainly on how anti-China political rhetoric fuels anti-Asian racial hatred (see e.g., Jeung and Lee 2021; Kim and Kesari 2021). Relatively little scholarly attention has been paid, however, to another crucial way in which anti-Asian racism potentially shapes the course of Sino-American great power competition: the rise of popular nationalism and hawkish mass opinion *in China*. In this paper, I examine how growing anti-Asian racial violence in the United States stimulates the emergence of exclusionary racial attitudes and nationalist sentiments among the Chinese masses, leading to higher levels of mass support for foreign policy aggression. In so doing, I highlight the role the Chinese state media have played in propagating dominant political narratives that frame the issue as a manifestation of both racially motivated American foreign policy and problems with American democracy. I argue that such dominant political discourses in China work to deepen the sense of victimhood, anti-white racial resentment, and Asian racial identity, all of which have long been central to the formation of national identity and popular nationalism in China.

I employ two studies to empirically assess the key claims I make in the paper. First, I conduct quantitative analyses of Chinese newspaper reports to examine how official narratives in

China transform the issue of anti-Asian racism in the United States into politically charged and mobilizing foreign policy discourses. Examining a large online archive of published news articles from China, I find that there has been a dramatic growth in the volume of the state media coverage of issues related to anti-Asian discrimination, especially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. I complement this finding with quantitative text analyses and a closer examination of the contents of relevant news reports, highlighting the two most prevalent themes running through the official narratives: On the one hand, the state media attribute growing anti-Asian racial violence to racially motivated American foreign policy toward China. The other prominent theme frames the issue as demonstrating the inherent limitations of American democracy and the hypocrisy of American criticisms of China's human rights issues. I then conduct a national survey experiment in China to assess the impact of such prevailing narratives on the political attitudes and policy preferences of the Chinese public. Experimental evidence confirms that the political narratives significantly increase the levels of Asian racial identity, anti-white sentiment, and a sense of national victimhood among the Chinese masses, leading to greater support for hawkish foreign policies and the current regime.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. In the next two sections, I provide a historical overview of the role race and racism have played in shaping Chinese national identity and political discourses and lay a theoretical framework from which I derive testable hypotheses on the relationships between anti-Asian racism, top-down political rhetoric, and mass political attitudes in China. Next, I introduce results from quantitative analyses of the Chinese state media coverage of anti-Asian racial violence. I then outline my experimental design and present key findings. Finally, I will wrap up the paper by discussing the limitations of my study and avenues for future research.

4.2 Anti-Asian Racism and the Rise of Hawkish Opinion in China

During the pandemic, China watchers have noticed the rise of hawkish nationalist sentiments in China as a reaction against Western criticisms of China's role in the crisis and ensuing racial violence against people of Asian descent. "The COVID-19 outbreak has triggered a new Cold War," writes an op-ed in *The Diplomat*, lamenting that "American and Chinese political hawks view the pandemic as the perfect opportunity for actualizing some long-standing ideological fixations," with the Chinese side perceiving the Western response to the pandemic as "an ethnocentric assault on *all Chinese*, regardless of nationality" (Wong 2020). *The Economist* (2020) observes the same phenomenon, concluding that "Chinese public discourse is dominated...by resentment of a West that [tries to] demonize and scapegoat China" (Zhang 2020).

In this chapter, I propose that anti-Asian racial violence in America and other Western societies directly affects the formation of hawkish foreign policy opinion in China, most importantly by strengthening anti-white racial sentiment, Asian identity, and a sense of victimhood among the Chinese public – some of the key psychological components of modern Chinese nationalism. Below, I discuss how these racialized sentiments and 'victim mindset' have been central to Chinese national identity and worldviews that continue to have significant influences on mass political and foreign policy views in China. I then discuss how the spotlighted issue of anti-Asian racism, framed in dominant political discourses by the Chinese state media, leads to heightened levels of hawkish public opinion in the country.

4.2.1   Race, racism, and China's "century of humiliation"

In the eyes of both Chinese elites and public, 'humiliation' defines the way foreign powers treated China in the history of modern international relations. According to the official narrative

promulgated by the Chinese government, Western imperial powers repeatedly violated the sovereignty of China during the "century of humiliation," beginning with the British invasion of the continent during the First Opium War in 1839. Once the center of a glorious civilization in Asia, the narrative goes, China fell victim to foreign intrusions and ensuing domestic upheaval throughout the period of national humiliation, which ended only with the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. As noted by historians and political scientists, the century of humiliation narrative has endured a long process of internalization, imprinting a strong sense of victimhood in the hearts of the Chinese masses (Cohen 2002; Gries 2004; Zheng 2008; Callahan 2010; Wang 2012). Now an essential element of popular nationalism in China, this "victim mentality" continues to shape the way Chinese view the world and interpret the actions of foreign powers toward China (Gries 2004).

Previous studies, however, have paid relatively little attention to one important psychological component of the century of humiliation narrative, which has been closely attached to the victim mentality in China: deep-seated anti-white racial resentment. Within the framework of national humiliation, China's major adversary has always been "the West," and now the United States in particular, which has long oppressed China (Gries 2004). The discourse of national humiliation in China therefore has strong *racial* connotations: To the Chinese mindset, it is "the white powers of Europe and America" (Dikötter 2015, 125) that have inflicted injustice on their country and the Chinese people on the international stage, which has been dominated by the logic and practice of white supremacy. Accordingly, the modern history of China's relationship with the West, perceived through the lens of humiliation and victimization, induces strong racialized sentiments among the Chinese masses, marked by mixed feelings of inferiority and resentment (Dikötter 2015).

In modern Chinese history, such racial thinking and the associated notion of "the West and Asia binary" (Sakai 2000) were foundational to the country's emerging national identity. The 'father of the nation' Sun Yat-sen's principle of 'racial nationalism' (民族主义), for example, called for establishing a unified Chinese nation with a strong sense of "nationalism [that] could forestall [the] racial destruction [of] the yellow race" (Dikötter 2015, 77-78; Leibold 2004). Along with other modern Chinese reformers, Sun Yat-sen believed that Chinese people, as descendants of the ancient mythological figure "Yellow Emperor" (黃帝), represent the Asian race and should lead the resistance against the white race of Europe and America (Sautman 1997; Dikötter 2015). Today, these beliefs persist in the minds of Chinese who subscribe to the prevailing narrative of China's century of humiliation. With the "white West" (Gries 2004; 38) identified as *the* perpetrator within the framework of national humiliation, anti-white racial resentment remains a key psychological element of Chinese identity and popular nationalism to this date. From this perspective, the rise of China as a great power therefore has opened up the possibility of redressing deep-seated resentment against the white-dominant global order (Adler-Nissen and Zarakol 2021).
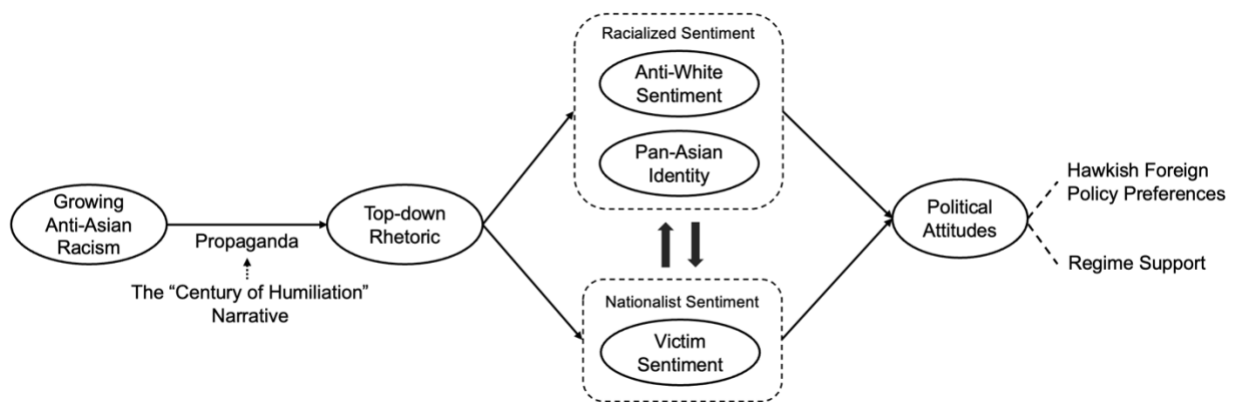

Figure 4.1: Anti-Asian racism, propaganda, and Chinese political attitudes: a conceptual framework

4.2.2 Anti-Asian racism, propaganda, and mass foreign policy preferences

Historically, racism and violence against Chinese and broader Asian communities in Western societies have served as a major catalyst in the formation of such racialized nationalist sentiments and hawkish foreign policy views among Chinese elites and masses. Witnessing the raging violence and discrimination against Chinese immigrants in late 19th century America, the Chinese scholar and diplomat Huang Zunxian expressed a deep sense of humiliation and resentment in his well-known poem: "Although the world's a big place, we Chinese crouch in terror, fearing to be devoured by demonic men. Our Celestial Envoy and the Yellow Race have become a laughingstock to all nations of the world" (Schmidt 1994, 246). To Chinese intellectuals like Huang Zunxian, the history of modern international relations was basically defined by global "racial warfare," where "the whites...ruthlessly destroyed the feeble and weak in the course of their conquest of the world" (Dikötter 2015, 98). As with Sun Yat-sen, this evolutionary worldview naturally gave rise to the promotion of nationalism and hawkish foreign policies as the only measure to ensure the survival of the "yellow race" (Dikötter 2015, 59).

Figure 4.1 illustrates a theoretical framework for the relationships between anti-Asian racism, elite political rhetoric, and mass Chinese political attitudes. Similar to the emergence of nationalist discourses in late 19th and early 20 century China, today's dramatic surge in anti-Asian racial violence has had significant effects on mobilizing nationalist and hawkish sentiments in China. Most importantly, anti-Asian racism during the pandemic appears to have solidified the Chinese view that foreign hostile forces ("境外敌对势力"), motivated by xenophobia and racial fears, aim to destabilize a rising China (Zhang 2020). Top-down political rhetoric in China has played a key role in this process. As will be empirically shown in the next section, the Chinese state media has framed anti-Asian racism in America and Western societies as a fundamentally foreign policy

issue, a manifestation of racially motivated Western hostility against China. Attached with the vivid images of helpless Asian victims beaten and killed in the streets of America, such dominant discourses reinvigorate the deep-seated racial resentment and sense of victimhood among the Chinese public.

Recent studies have shown how perceived humiliation and victimization directly affects the formation of aggressive foreign policy preferences. Xu and Zhao (2021), for example, field an online survey experiment in China to find that the victimization narrative significantly reinforces the Chinese public's suspicion of foreign powers during international disputes and strengthens support for aggressive foreign policies. Weiss and Dafoe (2019) also show that the humiliation narrative, when invoked by Chinese leaders during a foreign military crisis, can be a useful tool to rally the public around the government. Masterson (2022) further probes the psychological foundation of humiliation and its impact on conflict escalation, arguing that humiliation carries intense emotional arousal that motivates remedial action against perceived perpetrators. In the context of international politics, he presents experimental evidence that a deep sense of humiliation significantly increases individuals' preferences for inter-state conflict. Taken together, the above discussion leads to the following two testable hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (*H1*): Higher levels of anti-white sentiment, Asian identity, and victim sentiment among the Chinese public will predict greater support for hawkish Chinese foreign policies.

Hypothesis 2 (*H2*): Top-down political rhetoric on anti-Asian racism will increase anti-white sentiment, Asian identity, and victim sentiment among the Chinese public, leading to higher levels of support for hawkish Chinese foreign policies.

4.3 Chinese Political Rhetoric on Anti-Asian Racism: A Media Analysis

Before introducing the original public opinion survey designed and fielded to test my hypotheses, in this section I present results from observational analyses of top-down Chinese political rhetoric on anti-Asian racism as represented by the Chinese media coverage of the issue. In the framework outlined in **Figure 4.1**, I posited that dominant political discourses propagated by the Chinese government would have strong effects on Chinese public perceptions of growing anti-Asian racism, leading to heightened levels of exclusionary racial and nationalist sentiments and hawkish foreign policy preferences. Through the analysis of the state media coverage, I first examine how such official narratives in China frame and transform issues of domestic racial violence in the United States into politicizing discourses pertaining to U.S.-China relations.

I focus on two of the most official and widely circulated state media in China, *the People's Daily* and *the Global Times*, analyzing the trend and contents of news articles published between 1946 and 2021. Run by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, the People's Daily functions as one of the most influential media outlets conveying the official narratives of the Chinese government to its domestic and overseas audiences (Xu, Kostka, and Cao 2022). I also analyze the news coverage by the Global Times, a daily newspaper under the auspices of the People's Daily known for publicizing nationalistic voices on foreign affairs (Hernández 2019). Since the Global Times was founded in 1993, I gather published articles from the newspaper from 1993 to 2021. Together, these two media outlets provide perfect sources for the analysis of official

Chinese narratives and propaganda messages which, as I demonstrate with survey-based evidence in the next section, should have profound influences on mass political attitudes and policy preferences.
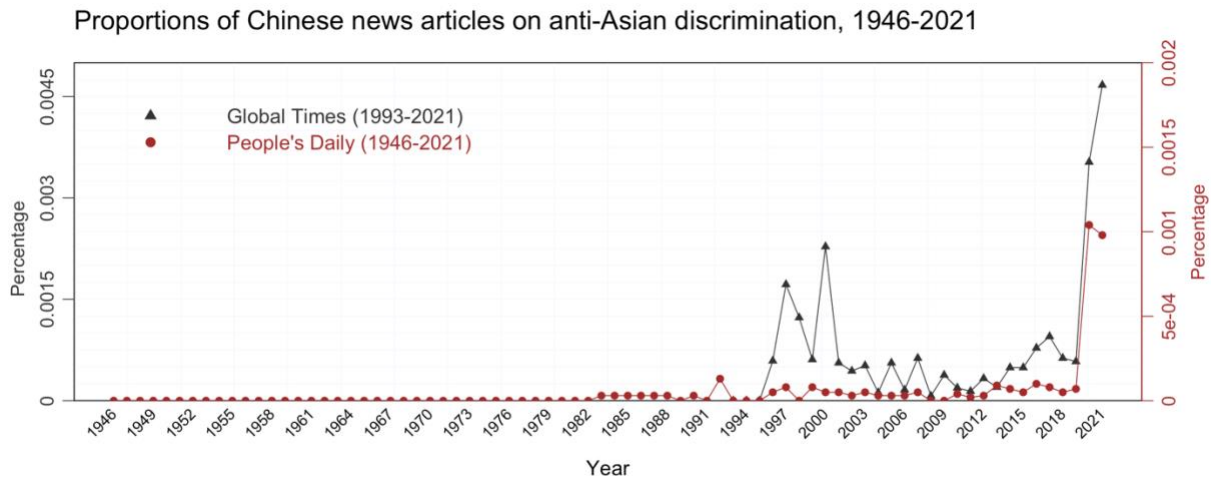
Figure 4.2: Chinese media coverage of anti-Asian racism

In the online archives of the two newspapers, [16] I retrieved over two million published articles in the People's Daily (1946-2021) and the Global Times (1993-2021) and searched for relevant articles with the following keywords: "racial" (种族) and "Asian" (亚裔).[17] I used these keywords instead of the more narrowly defined term "Chinese discrimination" for several practical reasons. First, there exist various forms of phrases related to the concept of Chinese discrimination and many of these associated phrases (e.g., "Anti-China" (反华)) have nothing to do with race or ethnicity-based discrimination. Instead, most of the articles discussing anti-Chinese discrimination refer to anti-Asian racism as background information, allowing a more comprehensive search with

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[16] I used the following online database to retrieve published articles from the two newspapers: http://data.people.com.cn/rmrb (People's Daily), http://data.people.com.cn/pd/hqsb (Global Times).

[17] I classified articles as relevant only when they included both keywords.

the selected keywords. I then manually reviewed the contents of each article and identified ones whose focus is on issues of anti-Asian racism and discrimination – a total of 110 articles in the People's Daily and 270 articles in the Global Times.

Figure 4.2 displays the percentage of these relevant articles for each year in the Global Times (in dark red) and in the People's Daily (in black) respectively. Most importantly, it shows a clear pattern of growing coverage of the issue with a noticeable spike in 2020. Except for the uptick in the late 1990s and early 2000s surrounding the controversy over a Chinese American nuclear scientist charged for alleged espionage, we can see that anti-Asian racism has become an unusually salient and widely discussed issue in China since the outbreak of the global pandemic and ensuing racial violence in 2020.

Table 4.1: Most frequently appearing characters in Chinese news articles on anti-Asian discrimination

Wordcloud	Character	# of occurrences
	美国 (America)	5738
	中国 (China)	2379
	亚裔 (Asian)	1898
	种族 (race)	1707
	歧视 (discriminate)	1246
	华人 (Chinese people)	1201
	疫 (epidemic)	1141
	政府 (government)	906
	社会 (society)	882
	国家 (country)	801
	主义 (doctrine)	717

To examine the specific contents of the news coverage, I conducted a quantitative analysis of the main texts of all newspaper articles on anti-Asian discrimination from the Global Times and the People's Daily. After removing punctuation, numbers, and Chinese stopwords, I retrieved the

most frequently appearing characters in the published articles on the issue, as shown in **Table 4.1**. As expected, the Chinese media primarily focus on reporting anti-Asian racial violence committed in the United States following the outbreak of the global pandemic. More importantly, many news articles reference the United States (美国) and China (中国) together, suggesting that the issue is frequently discussed in close connection with the broader context of contemporary Sino-American relations.

A closer examination of the relevant news articles reveals two prominent themes running through the media coverage: On the one hand, the state media attribute growing anti-Asian racial violence to racially motivated American foreign policy toward China, asserting that elites in Washington strategically stoke xenophobic sentiments to mobilize mass support for hostile China policies. A People's Daily article on December 31, 2021, for example, reads: "America is rekindling the dangerous myth of the "Yellow Peril" to confront China...American politics has long been dominated by white Americans, with deep-seated systemic racial discrimination. Ethnic minorities, including Chinese Americans, are victims."[18] Similarly, an earlier article from the Global Times quotes an op-ed written by an Asian American activist: "Today, as Washington cynically promotes Yellow Peril as a strategy to pass major legislation at home and retain America supremacy abroad, Asian American and Pacific Islanders face increased surveillance, harassment, and attacks."[19]

The other prominent approach frames the issue as demonstrating the inherent limitations and inferiority of American democracy. Pointing to continued racial violence and conflicts within American society, the news articles dismiss American criticisms of human rights issues in China

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[18] https://english.news.cn/20211231/6cb329725b8f44a9ab18108d55371e78/c.html. Accessed May 1, 2022.

[19] https://news.sina.cn/gn/2021-05-22/detail-ikmxzfmm3930015.d.html. Accessed May 1, 2022.

as "hypocritic," an insidious attempt to delegitimize the Chinese government. For instance, a short yet sweeping article by the People's Daily contends that "Without solving its own domestic problems, the U.S. is increasingly interfering in China's internal affairs in the name of human rights and democracy." Citing remarks by Chinese officials, the article then directs attention to the "poor racial record" in America, marked by "discrimination and brutality against African Americans and bullying of Asian Americans."[20]

4.4 Experimental Design

To examine how these official narratives affect the political attitudes and foreign policy preferences of the Chinese public, I conducted an online national survey in mainland China in March 2022, working with a local survey firm to recruit a total of 2,007 Chinese adults from across the country (see **Figure 4.3**). The online sample provides an appropriate source of public opinion among Chinese internet users who have been identified as "an important constituency for regime stability and leadership survival in China" (Li, Shi, and Zhu 2018, 6; see also King, Pan, and Roberts 2013). The sample was balanced on age and gender – 47% of participants were female, the average age was 40-41 years, 5% identified themselves as an ethnic minority, and 68% had a college degree. Participants were also recruited from diverse economic backgrounds with varying levels of political knowledge (see **Table 4.8** in the Appendix for summary statistics). By balancing on age, I partially mitigate concerns about the representativeness of online samples used for survey research in China which has relied heavily on college students and young netizens. In my analyses, I control for all measurable sample characteristics to address any remaining demographic

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[20] http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-08/13/c_1310123947.htm. Accessed May 1, 2022.

imbalances.[21] The sample yielded a noticeably high level of attentiveness with over 95% of respondents passing the attention check item.[22]
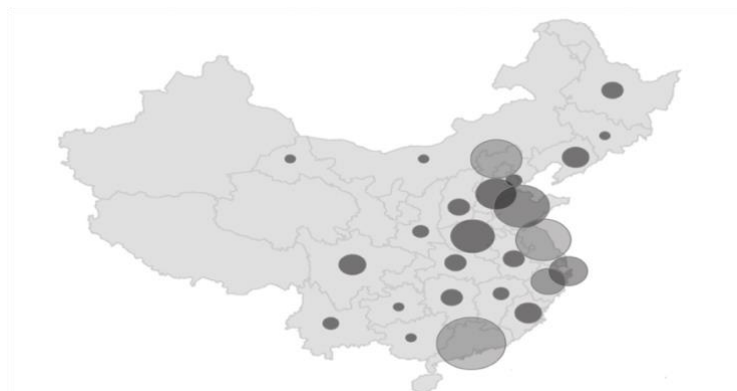

Figure 4.3: Number of respondents in each province in China

The purpose of the survey was twofold. First, I administered batteries of questions capturing the Chinese public's racial attitudes, nationalist sentiment, and political and policy preferences – the key constructs and outcome measures in my conceptual framework (**Figure 4.1**).[23] I first examine the associations between these variables to test my argument that racialized sentiments (i.e., anti-white sentiment and pan-Asian identity) and the perception of China as victimized by Western powers strongly shape public support for hawkish foreign policies (***H1***). Second, I embedded an experiment in the survey to examine the role official Chinese narratives play in shaping public responses to growing anti-Asian racism and discrimination in the United States. As explained in detail below, I used excerpts from actual news articles on the issue to construct treatment vignettes. With the experimental design, I test the effects such messages might

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[21] For example, the resultant sample was somewhat more educated than the general Chinese population, comparable to samples for previous survey research in China (see e.g., Huang 2015; Dafoe et al. 2022).

[22] All the main results remain the same with or without dropping inattentive respondents. In the paper, I include all respondents from the survey.

[23] See below for detailed question item wordings.

have on the public's racialized and nationalist sentiments, political attitudes, and foreign policy preferences. Specifically, I examine whether such political rhetoric significantly boosts mass support for hawkish foreign policies and confrontational stances against the U.S., mediated by increased levels of anti-white sentiment, Asian identity, and victim sentiment (**H2**).
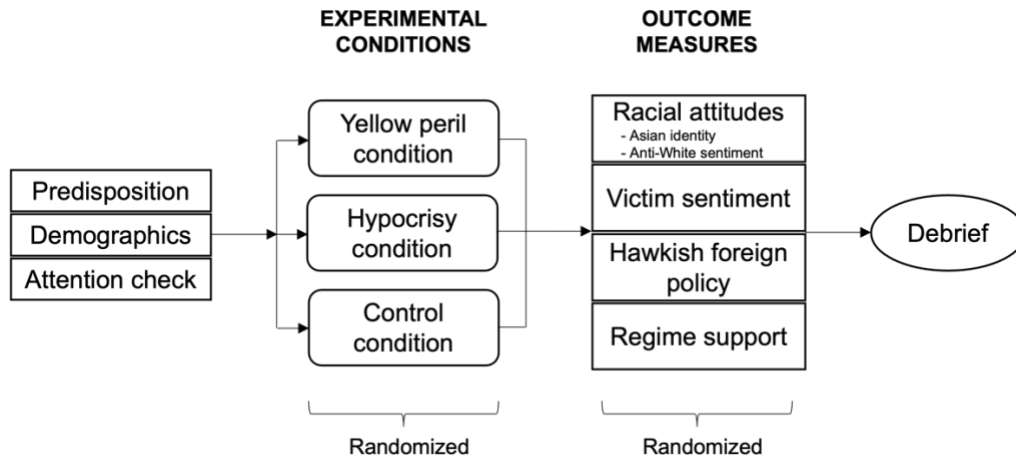
Figure 4.4: Experimental design

Figure 4.4 summarizes the design of the survey experiment. After answering a battery of questions measuring demographic and dispositional traits,[24] respondents read a vignette randomly chosen from two treatment conditions and a control condition, followed by a short manipulation check. Following recommended practice (Montgomery, Nyhan, and Torres 2018; Kane and Barabas 2019), I do not drop any respondents from my analyses based on this post-treatment manipulation check. All results remain robust to excluding respondents failing the test. Respondents then proceeded to answer a randomly ordered set of outcome measures and were debriefed at the end of the survey.

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[24] Predispositional traits include nationalism and military assertiveness.

Table 4.2: Excerpts from treatment vignettes

The Yellow Peril Narrative Condition	The US Hypocrisy Narrative Condition
According to USA Today on May 6th, a report from the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino shows there was a more than 164% increase in anti-Asian hate crimes reported to the police in the first quarter of 2021 in 16 major cities compared with last year.	
据《今日美国报》网站 6 日报道,美国加利福尼亚州立大学圣贝纳迪诺分校下属的仇恨和极端主义研究中心报告显示,今年第一季度美国 16 座大城市警方收到的反亚裔仇恨犯罪报告比去年同期激增 164%。	
Today, as Washington cynically promotes Yellow Peril as a strategy to pass major legislation at home and retain America supremacy abroad, Asian American and Pacific Islanders face increased surveillance, harassment, and attacks.	*Without solving its own domestic problems, the U.S. is increasingly interfering in China's internal affairs in the name of human rights and democracy. The U.S. has hurled accusations at the Chinese government's recent deradicalization efforts in Xinjiang.*
今天,当华盛顿将"黄祸论"作为工具,以此来推动重大立法通过并在海内外鼓吹"美国优先",亚裔美国人和太平洋岛民受到更多的监视、骚扰和攻击。	美国非但没有着手解决其自身的国内问题,还越来越多地以人权和民主为借口干涉中国内政。美国近来一直大肆污蔑中国政府在新疆去极端化方面作出的努力。

All three vignettes were similar in length and structure and the control condition contained excerpts from a report on pandas – a non-political placebo message. **Table 4.2** presents shortened versions of the two treatment conditions.[25] Drawing from my observational study in the previous section, I constructed the vignettes based on excerpts from actual newspaper articles published in the People's Daily and the Global Times. By maximizing the external validity of the treatment messages, I ensure that survey responses best approximate real-world public reactions to top-down political discourses in China. As pointed out above, official narratives in the state media have discussed growing anti-Asian racism in the context of foreign affairs, framing the issue as an extension of racially motivated U.S. efforts to contain China and a manifestation of problems with American democracy. To more cleanly tease out the effects of different political messages on the issue, I designed two separate experimental conditions, one focused on criticizing American foreign military policy toward China (the "yellow peril narrative condition") and the other on

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[25] see **Table 4.9** in the Appendix for full versions of the three conditions.

denouncing the U.S. as hypocritic in its attempt to intervene in China's domestic problems (the "U.S. hypocrisy narrative condition").

As shown in **Table 4.2**, both vignettes start with identical information about the recent increase in anti-Asian hate crimes in the U.S. The "yellow peril narrative condition" then explains the phenomenon as a consequence of Washington's China strategy that is based on racism and irrational fear. The message emphasizes that American politicians stoke anti-Asian racism to promote confrontational policies against China, victimizing people of Asian descent at home and abroad. The "U.S. hypocrisy narrative condition" adopts a slightly different angle – attributing the rising hate crimes to the limitations of American democracy, the message points out that when it comes to the controversy over Hong Kong and Xinjiang, the U.S. is unfairly interfering in China's internal affairs in the name of human rights and democracy. The second treatment message thus reflects the prevailing rhetorical strategy of "whataboutism" in Chinese foreign policy discourses that point at anti-Asian racism and domestic racial conflicts as evidence of American hypocrisy (Sullivan and Wang 2022). With these two experimental conditions, I can assess how different elements in dominant political rhetoric in China shape mass responses to the widely publicized issue of anti-Asian racial violence.

For the rest of the section, I review in detail my key outcome measures that followed one of the three experimental conditions. First, I build on the widely utilized white identity scale (Jardina 2019) to construct a measure of *Asian identity*, replacing the term "white" with "Asian" in its original scale items. As shown in **Table 4.3**, the scale captures three central elements of racial identity as discussed in Jardina (2019) – how strongly individuals identify with a racial group (the "importance" item), feel positively toward the group (the "pride" item), and maintain a sense of belonging and commonality (the "commonness" item). I then calculated composite scores by

averaging responses to these three question items such that a higher score indicates a stronger attachment to Asian identity. To my best knowledge, this study is the first in political science to administer such a comprehensive and direct measure of pan-Asian racial identity in China where previous research has focused heavily on the evolving configuration and political effects of nationalism and national identity (see e.g., Gries 2004; Gries et al. 2011; Han 2013; Johnston 2017). As a noticeable exception, Chung (2022) fields an experiment in China to manipulate the salience of a supranational Asian identity and asks subjects about the perceived importance of being Asian. In this study, I employ the racial identity scale from the race scholarship to capture a fuller picture of racialized identity and its political implications in China.

Table 4.3: Asian identity and victim sentiment questions

Asian Identity	Victim Sentiment
• How important is being Asian to your identity? (1=Not at all important – 5=Extremely important) 你认为"亚裔"这一标签对你的身份认同有多重要? • To what extent do you feel that Asian people have a lot to be proud of? (1=None at all – 5=A great deal) 你认为亚洲人应该为"亚裔"这一身份感到自豪吗? • How much would you say that Asians around the world have a lot in common with one another? (1=None at all in common – 5=A great deal in common) 请问你认为世界各地的亚洲人有多少共同点?	Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (1=Strongly disagree – 5=Strongly agree) • China's modern diplomatic history with Western imperial powers is a history of humiliation. 中国与西方帝国主义势力的近代外交史是一段屈辱的历史。 • The century of humiliation not only describes China's past, but also describes how foreigners treat China today. 百年国耻不但描述中国的过去,也同样描述了如今外国对待中国的行为。 • Given China's long history and glorious civilization, China should naturally take the lead in East Asia. 中国的悠久历史和光辉的文明使中国天然地在东亚处于领先位置。

I additionally included the standard racial feeling thermometer scale (Sides and Gross 2013) to construct a measure of *anti-white sentiment*, which I consider to be another key dimension

of racialized sentiments among the Chinese public. Participants expressed their favorability of four different racial groups – whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians – with a continuous scale ranging from 0 ("Unfavorable, cold feeling") to 100 ("Favorable, warm feeling"). I then subtracted target out-group (i.e., whites) from in-group (i.e., Asians) ratings to calculate scores for anti-white sentiment – how unfavorably Chinese view whites vis-à-vis the baseline in-group category. Instead of using the absolute score of favorability toward whites, I employ this relative (in-group minus out-group ratings) score following advice by Sides and Gross (2013) that this method helps account for respondent heterogeneity in answering such rating scales.[26]

I hypothesized that along with the two racialized sentiments – pan-Asian identity and anti-white sentiment, the perception of China as a victim of foreign aggression (the victim sentiment) should be a key predictor of Chinese views toward the U.S. and broader foreign policy preferences (***H1***). Furthermore, exposure to political narratives on growing anti-Asian violence would not only heighten exclusionary racial attitudes among Chinese but also consolidate the prevailing worldview of China's "humiliation by the West" (***H2***). To capture this distinct sense of victimhood, I adopt the three-item version of the "victim index" developed by Xu and Zhao (2021). As shown in **Table 4.3**, respondents indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with the statements that reflect the key components of the century of humiliation narrative: China's modern-day interaction with the West is a history of humiliation that continues to define how foreigners treat China today, and China should take the lead in Asia to restore its past glory. Again, I came up with composite scores for *victim sentiments* by averaging responses to these items, with higher values indicating stronger support for the victim narrative.

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[26] For example, some respondents might give systematically high or low ratings for all racial groups.

Table 4.4: Hawkish foreign policy questions

Hawkish Foreign Policy
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (1=Strongly disagree – 5=Strongly agree)

- (Reverse-coded) China should respect the United States' position as the leader in the Asia-Pacific and avoid military confrontation with it.
  中国应该尊重美国在亚太地区的领导者地位，并避免与美国的军事冲突。

- China should ask the United States to stop entering and leaving the South China Sea without China's permission, even if it brings more military tensions with the United States.
  中国应该要求美国停止在没有得到中国许可的情况下穿越南海，哪怕这可能会造成于美国更严重的军事紧张局势。

- If necessary, China should use military forces against Southeast Asian countries to take back its territory in the South China Sea.
  如果有必要，中国应该对东南亚国家使用军事力量来夺回在南海的领土。

- China should expand its economic and military influence in Central and Southeast Asia even if it brings more tensions with the United States.
  中国应该扩展其在中亚和东南亚的经济和军事影响力，哪怕这会造成中国和美国关系更紧张的局势。

As outlined in **Table 4.4**, I measure the level of support for hawkish Chinese foreign policy with four question items that were answered with a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree." The first two items, capturing preferences for avoiding military confrontation with the United States in general (reverse-coded) and standing firm against American naval forces in the South China Sea, were adopted from Xu and Zhao (2021). I additionally constructed the last two items to gauge respondents' support for using military force against Southeast Asian countries to resolve territorial disputes in the South China Sea and for expanding geopolitical influence in the broader Asia-Pacific. While these questions certainly do not tap into all different aspects of contemporary Chinese foreign policies, they do cover some of the most salient international problems China is facing today, especially with regard to its relationship with the United States. Based on these four items, I calculated composite scores for *hawkish foreign policy preferences* to be included in my main analyses.

Table 4.5: Political system support questions

Support for Political System
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (1=Strongly disagree – 5=Strongly agree)

- The United States can never be a leader of democracy and human rights.
  美国永远不会成为民主和人权的领导者。

- Comparing with foreign political systems, I would rather live under the political system of our country.
  相比于国外的政治体系，我更倾向于生活在我们的政治系统下。

Finally, I used two items in **Table 4.5** to measure support for China's political system. Answered with a five-point Likert scale, the first item asks respondents to evaluate American democracy – the utmost alternative political system in the minds of the Chinese public. The second item, adopted again from Xu and Zhao (2021), more directly asks respondents to indicate the level of support for the current political system in China.

4.5 Results

4.5.1 Racial attitudes and victim sentiment among the Chinese public

Now I turn to my key findings, starting with the analysis of racial attitudes and victim sentiment as measured by the racial feeling thermometer, Asian identity scale, and victim index. **Figure 4.5** summarizes the distributions of Chinese feelings toward the four racial groups (0 = "Unfavorable, cold feeling" – 100 = "Favorable, warm feeling"). Most importantly, I find that the Chinese respondents feel overwhelmingly more favorably toward Asians ($M = 74.5$, $SD = 0.22$) than toward whites ($M = 48.5$, $SD = 0.22$), Blacks ($M = 47.1$, $SD = 0.23$), and Hispanics ($M = 50.0$, $SD = 0.20$).[27] While Hispanics are viewed neither coldly nor warmly, both whites and Blacks

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[27] The group rating differences are all statistically significant according to t-tests.

overall are viewed unfavorably. This result suggests the presence of strong racial in-group favoritism among the Chinese public – they express starkly divergent views toward different racial groups, favoring Asians over the other racial outgroups.
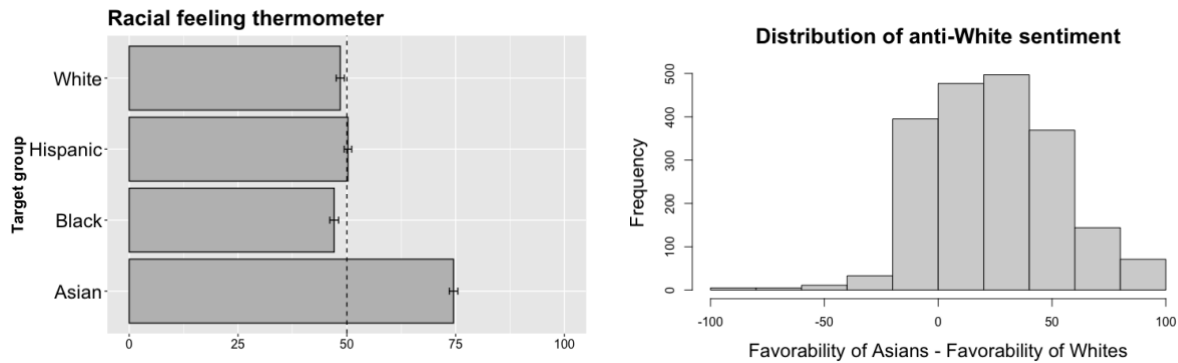
Figure 4.5: Distribution of racial group favorability and anti-white sentiment

Below, I delve deeper into Chinese views toward Asians by examining the detailed configuration of pan-Asian racial identity. The right panel of **Figure 4.5** displays the distributions of *anti-white sentiment* calculated by subtracting white from Asian ratings in the feeling thermometer scale, with higher scores indicating more negative views toward white people. Most of the Chinese respondents scored higher than 0, exhibiting high overall levels of negative feelings toward whites. By exploiting individual variations on this scale, below I demonstrate the role anti-white sentiments play in shaping public support for hawkish foreign policies and the political system in China.
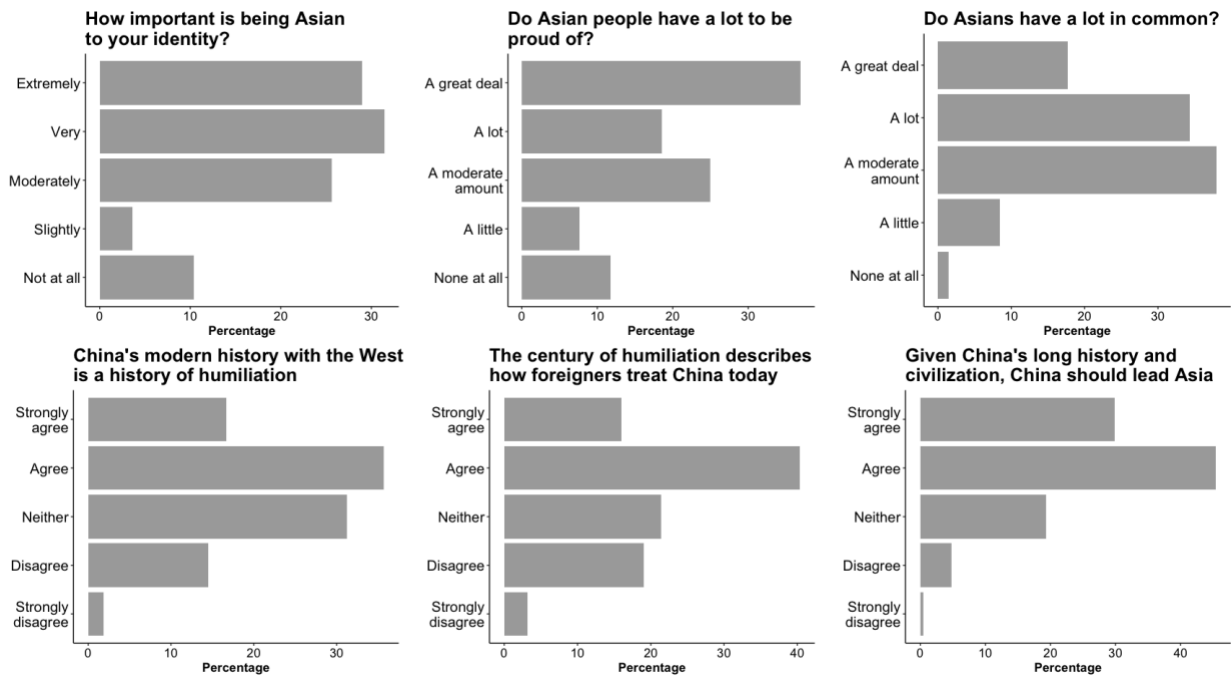
Figure 4.6: Distribution of responses to the Asian identity (top) and victim sentiment (bottom) scales

In line with the above finding on the noticeably high overall level of positive feelings toward Asians, the analysis of responses to the Asian identity scale suggests that Asian racial identity figures prominently in the minds of the Chinese public. The top panel of **Figure 4.6** summarizes aggregate responses to the three key components of Asian identity. First, a majority (about 60 percent) of the survey participants stated that being Asian is either extremely or very important to their identity. Asian identity is slightly or not at all important to only about 13 percent of the respondents, suggesting a strong overall identification with the racial group. Next, almost 55 percent reported that Asians have either a great deal or a lot to be proud of. Adding those who chose "a moderate amount," a considerably large portion of the Chinese maintain a high level of positive images of the racial group. Finally, participants expressed a strong sense of commonality among Asian people, with only less than 10 percent stating that Asians have either a little or none

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in common. Taken together, the evidence suggests that the Chinese public possesses strong racial consciousness, exhibiting a high level of Asian racial identity. This result is remarkable, especially in light of previous findings on white racial consciousness in the United States measured with the same racial identity scale. According to Jardina (2019), 30 to 40 percent of white Americans across diverse national surveys fielded between 2010 and 2016 indicated that their racial identity is either extremely or very important to them. The corresponding figure in China was almost 60 percent. For the "pride" and "commonness" items, 54 percent and 41 percent of white Americans respectively chose either "a great deal" or "a lot" in a 2016 YouGov survey. In my sample, about 56 percent and 52 percent respectively chose the response options.

The bottom panel of **Figure 4.6** also demonstrates that the Chinese public strongly sympathizes with the century of humiliation narrative. 52 percent of the respondents agreed that a century of humiliation indeed defines China's modern-day interactions with Western countries while only 16 percent disagreed with such a view. More than 56 percent further accepted that humiliation continues to describe how foreigners treat China today. The last statement even more strongly resonated with the mass perceptions: over 75 percent agreed that China should be a hegemonic power in Asia again "given its long history and civilization." Only 5 percent disagreed with the proposition.
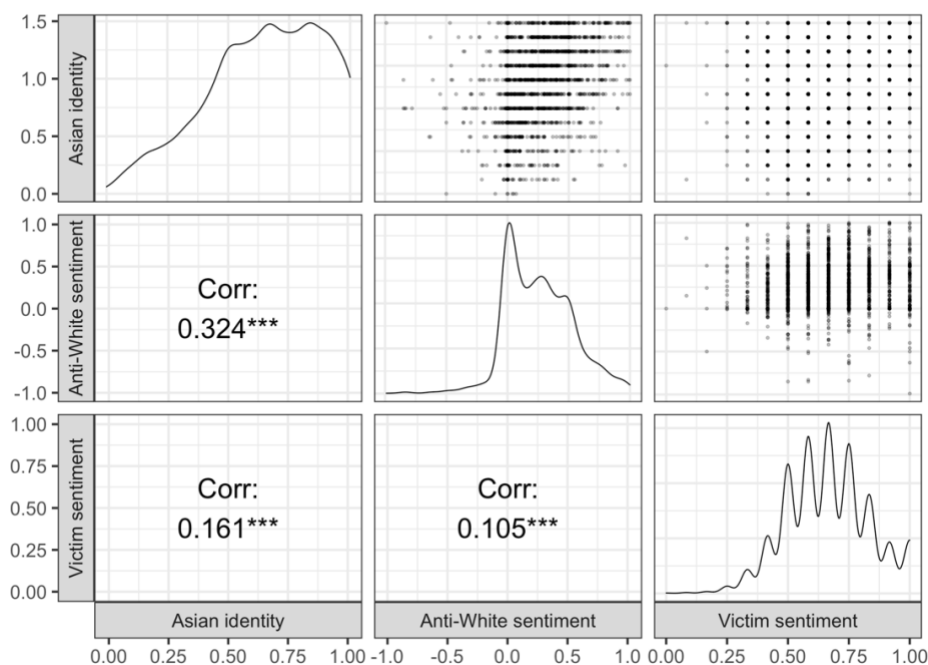
Figure 4.7: Correlations between Asian identity, anti-white sentiment, and victim sentiment

The results thus far demonstrate the presence of strong racialized views and victim sentiments among the Chinese public who readily identify as Asian, express largely negative views toward white people, and consider China as a victim at the hands of foreign aggressors. This first-cut evidence thus suggests that the Chinese perceive the world not only through the ideological narrative of victimization but also through a *racial* lens characterized by a strong sense of Asian identity and anti-white sentiment. Of course, the victim sentiment and exclusionary racial attitudes, as discussed above, are closely interconnected: Identifying *white* Western powers as the perpetrators, the discourse of national humiliation helps reinforce a racial consciousness among the Chinese masses. As shown in **Figure 4.7**, my survey data also confirm that higher levels of victim sentiment are indeed significantly correlated with stronger Asian identity and anti-white sentiments. In the next section, I test my first hypothesis that these key dispositional traits are important factors shaping hawkish foreign policy preferences in China.

Table 4.6: Predictors of support for hawkish foreign policy and political system: OLS regression results

	Support for Hawkish Foreign Policy				Support for Political System			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Favorability: Asian	.02***				.04***			
	(.003)				(.004)			
Favorability: White	-.02***				-.03***			
	(.004)				(.01)			
Favorability: Black	-.02***				-.003			
	(.004)				(.01)			
Favorability: Hispanic	.01**				.01			
	(.005)				(.01)			
Anti-white sentiment		.02***				.04***		
		(.01)				(.01)		
Anti-Black sentiment		.02***				.004		
		(.01)				(.01)		
Anti-Hispanic sentiment		-.01*				-.01		
		(.01)				(.01)		
Asian identity			.01***				.04***	
			(.003)				(.004)	
Victim sentiment				.04***				.06***
				(.003)				(.004)
Military assertiveness	.03***	.03***	.03***	.03***				
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)				
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Treatment dummies	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007
R^2	.15	.14	.12	.16	.08	.07	.08	.13

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Outcome measures are recoded 0-1. Each model controls for demographic covariates and treatment dummies. All key predictors presented above are standardized for comparison of effect sizes. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

4.5.2 Predictors of mass support for hawkish foreign policy

Table 4.6 summarizes results from a series of OLS regression models testing the power of racial attitudes and victim sentiment in predicting public support for hawkish Chinese foreign policies (Models 1-4).[28] For the dependent variable, I use the composite score averaging responses

[28] Each model controls for treatment dummies, standard demographics, and additionally for Models 1-4, military assertiveness. By controlling for military assertiveness, a widely used measure of baseline foreign policy hawkishness in IR (Kertzer and Seitzoff 2017), I partially mitigate the potential concern that the exclusionary racial attitudes merely capture generalized outgroup aggression leading to hawkish preferences.

to the four foreign policy items ranging from using military force in the South China Sea to expanding China's geopolitical influence in Central and Southeast Asia at the expense of heightened tensions with the United States. As expected, both warmer feelings toward Asians and colder feelings toward whites significantly predict higher levels of hawkish preferences. Similarly, anti-white sentiment, Asian identity, and victim sentiment all turn out as significant predictors in expected directions.

Moving from the coldest to warmest feelings toward Asians, the predicted probability goes up by over 20 percentage points. When moving from the coldest to warmest feelings toward whites, the predicted probability goes *down* by about 5 percentage points. Both anti-white sentiment and Asian identity also display comparable effect sizes: those who express the highest levels of anti-white sentiment and Asian identity are about 10 percentage points more likely to support hawkish foreign policies than those who score lowest on the scales. I find that victim sentiment exerts even more pronounced effects on foreign policy preferences, boosting mass support for hawkish policies by over 30 percentage points. Models 5-8 additionally demonstrate the strong effects these dispositional traits have on public support for the current political system in China.

To summarize, the data corroborate my expectation that the racialized and victim sentiments prevalent among the Chinese public powerfully shape mass support for the ruling regime and China's greater geopolitical influence in the region. Now I turn to the experimental evidence showing the effects of top-down political narratives on the public's racialized and victim sentiments and political attitudes.
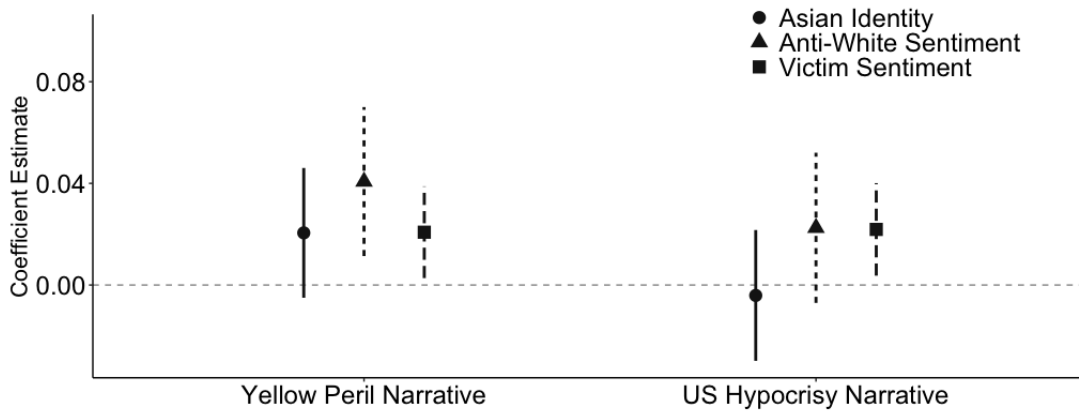
Figure 4.8: Treatment effects on racial attitudes and victim sentiment

4.5.3 Effects of top-down political rhetoric

I begin by examining how the two different versions of political narratives on anti-Asian racism affect the Chinese public's racial attitudes and victim sentiment. **Figure 4.8** displays estimates of average treatment effects on the three key dispositional traits, based on results from OLS regression models in **Table 4.7**. The figure shows the effect of each treatment condition compared to the control group, with each outcome measure re-scaled to range from 0 to 1.

First, upon reading the message connecting growing anti-Asian racism to a racially motivated U.S. attempt to contain China (the "yellow peril narrative"), the Chinese respondents became significantly more willing to express anti-white and victim sentiments by approximately 4 and 2 percentage points respectively. Full results in **Table 4.7** further indicate that the experimental condition shifted the public attitudes toward whites but not toward Blacks or Hispanics. In addition, I find that the aggregate effect on victim sentiment was driven by a 4 percentage-point increase in the perception that humiliation continues to define how foreigners treat China today (Model 10). The narrative also boosted Asian racial identity by about 2 percentage points, though the effect fails to reach statistical significance. Disaggregating the result by each item of the Asian identity scale in **Table 4.7**, however, I find that the treatment message

significantly increased the Chinese perception that being Asian is important to their identity (Model 2).

The figure also shows that the second treatment message – the other prevailing narrative that frames the issue as demonstrating the problems of American democracy and the hypocrisy of American foreign policy (the "U.S. hypocrisy narrative") – significantly led to a 2 percentage-point increase in the level of victim sentiments among the Chinese. As in the case of the first treatment message, the aggregate effect on victim sentiment was entirely driven by a 4 percentage-point increase in the view that China is still being humiliated by foreign powers (Model 10). There was an approximately 2 percentage-point increase in the level of anti-white sentiment, but the effect was statistically insignificant. Finally, the message did not meaningfully shift the respondents' level of Asian identity.
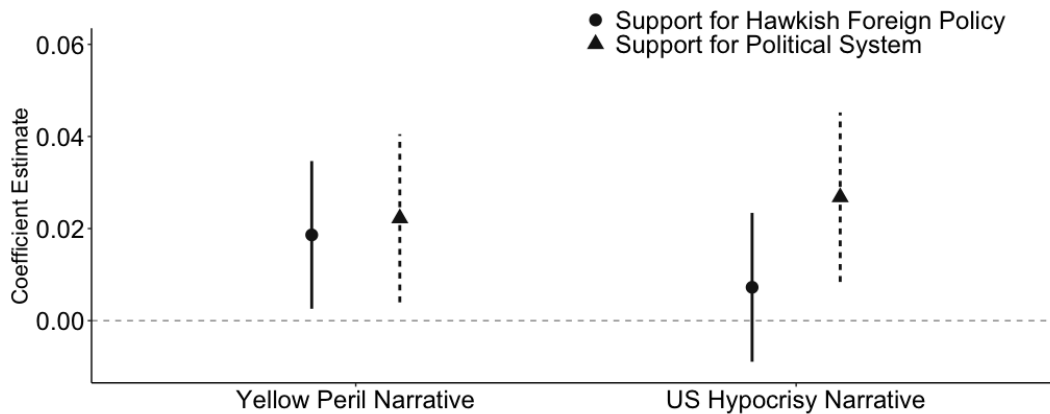

Figure 4.9: Treatment effects on hawkish foreign policy preference and regime support

Table 4.7: Treatment effects: OLS regression results

	Asian Identity				Feelings toward Racial Outgroups				Victim Sentiment		
	Index (1)	Important (2)	Proud (3)	Common (4)	Anti-White (5)	Anti-Black (6)	Anti-Hispanic (7)	Index (8)	Humiliated: past (9)	Humiliated: today (10)	Take lead in Asia (11)
Control group mean	*.65*	*.65*	*.66*	*.64*	*.24*	*.26*	*.23*	*.65*	*.62*	*.59*	*.74*
Yellow peril condition	.02 (.01)	.04* (.02)	.005 (.02)	.02 (.01)	.04** (.01)	.02 (.01)	.02 (.01)	.02* (.01)	.003 (.01)	.04** (.01)	.02 (.01)
US hypocrisy condition	-.004 (.01)	.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.02* (.01)	.004 (.01)	.04** (.01)	.02 (.01)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007
R^2	.01	.01	.01	.01	.02	.03	.01	.02	.04	.01	.01

	Hawkish Foreign Policy Preferences					Political System Support		
	Index (12)	Respect US leadership (13)	Stop US in SCS (14)	Use force in SCS (15)	Expand in Asia (16)	Index (17)	US system (18)	Chinese system (19)
Control group mean	*.65*	*.60*	*.80*	*.65*	*.58*	*.79*	*.75*	*.83*
Yellow peril condition	.02* (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.03* (.01)	.02 (.01)	.02* (.01)	.02* (.01)	.02* (.01)
US hypocrisy condition	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.001 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.03** (.01)	.03** (.01)	.02* (.01)
Demographic controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007	2,007
R^2	.07	.04	.05	.02	.02	.02	.03	.01

Note: OLS regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. "Index" refers to the aggregate (additive) scale for each battery. Outcome measures were recoded 0-1. "Respect US leadership" variable was reverse-coded. SCS=South China Sea. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$. *** $p<.001$.

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Do these top-down political narratives effectively shift the Chinese public's political preferences? **Figure 4.9** displays estimates of treatment effects on the two key political attitudes – support for hawkish foreign policies and the political system in China, based on Models 12 and 17 in **Table 4.7**. After being exposed to the "yellow peril narrative," the Chinese respondents became significantly more supportive of both hawkish foreign policies and the country's current political system respectively by approximately 2 percentage points. Disaggregating the result by each scale item, I first find that the aggregate effect on foreign policy opinion was driven by a 3 percentage-point increase in the level of support for using military force in the South China Sea. Regarding regime support, I find that the message significantly led to a 2 percentage-point increase in each scale item, augmenting the belief in both the limitations of American democracy and the superiority of China's political system. The "hypocrisy narrative" had a more pronounced effect on regime support, leading to a 3 percentage-point increase in the level of mass support for China's political system – which is not surprising given the message's focus on criticizing the American political system. The second treatment message, however, turned out to have a weaker and statistically insignificant effect on foreign policy opinion.
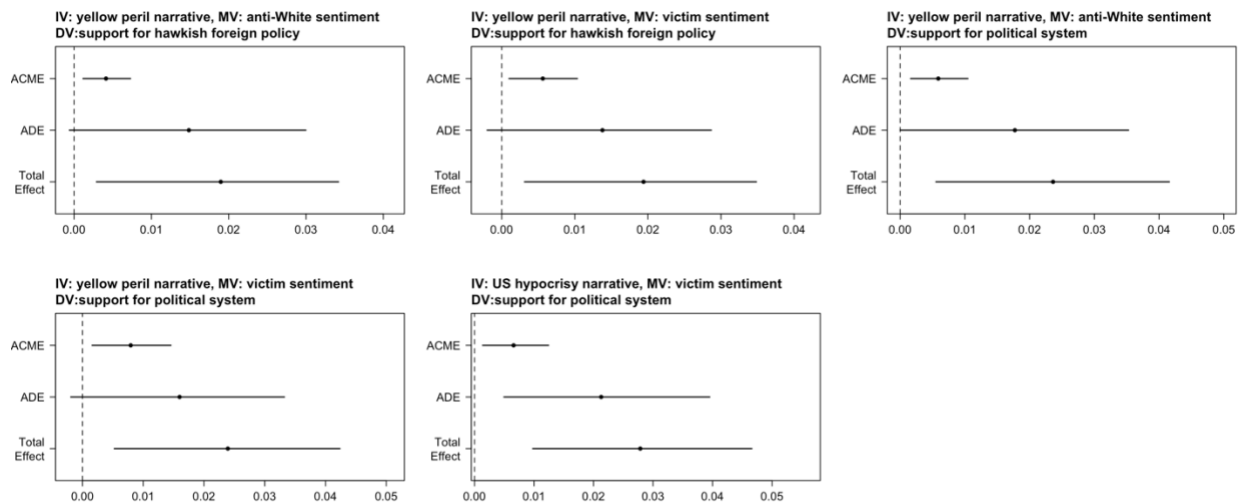

Figure 4.10: Causal mediation analyses

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Finally, I test whether the racialized and victim sentiments significantly mediated the treatment effects on mass political attitudes in China. **Figure 5.0** summarizes results from a series of causal mediation analyses (Imai et al. 2011) calculated using $N = 1,000$ simulations, in which each treatment condition's effects on political preferences are mediated through anti-white and victim sentiments, as indicated by the average causal mediation effect (ACME). The data largely confirm my second hypothesis derived from the theoretical framework in **Figure 4.1**: First, increased levels of anti-white and victim sentiments significantly mediated the effects of the "yellow peril narrative" on greater support for hawkish foreign policies and the current political system in China. The victim sentiment also significantly mediated the effect of the "U.S. hypocrisy narrative" on higher levels of mass support for the regime.

4.6 Discussion

In this chapter, I highlighted the implications of growing anti-Asian racism during the pandemic for contemporary U.S.-China relations, with a focus on its effects on the formation of foreign policy discourses and public opinion in China. The analysis of the Chinese state media reveals that the official narratives in China frame the issue as a manifestation of both racially motivated American foreign policy and problems with American democracy. Through a survey experiment, I find that these prevailing political narratives in China effectively prime the public with a sense of victimhood and garner higher levels of mass support for the regime. The "yellow peril narrative," furthermore, activates exclusionary racial attitudes among the Chinese public, heightening both pan-Asian racial identity and negative feelings toward white people. This rhetoric goes even further in terms of mass political attitudes, mobilizing domestic support for China's more active and confrontational foreign policies. In short, the experimental evidence suggests that

the official Chinese discourses on growing anti-Asian violence have far-reaching political consequences in China, consolidating the racialized and victim sentiments in the minds of the Chinese public and leading to higher levels of mass support for the regime and the country's better standing in the world.

Several limitations of the present study suggest promising avenues for future research. First, follow-up studies can employ more diverse measures of racial attitudes to account for potential differences in understandings of race and racial identity between the Chinese and American publics. In this chapter, for example, I utilized the standard racial feeling thermometer scale to capture Chinese attitudes toward different racial groups and construct a measure of anti-white sentiment. As discussed in Chapter 2, however, the favorability scale falls short of revealing the detailed contents of racialized sentiments, making it difficult to interpret how respondents construe the meaning of "favorable/warm" versus "unfavorable/cold" feelings toward particular racial groups. Follow-up survey research can incorporate more granular measures of racialized sentiments such as the racial stereotype scales to highlight the specific dimensions and contents of racial attitudes in China. This will also allow us to have a clearer picture of what constitutes anti-white racial resentment in the Chinese context.

Second, the use of excerpts from actual newspaper articles for treatment vignettes, while enhancing the external validity of my experimental findings, entail the issue of bundled treatments. Most importantly, the differences in treatment effects between the two experimental conditions could be attributed to varying levels of emphasis on anti-Asian racism or foreign policy implications of the given issue. Building on this chapter's findings, follow-up studies can utilize more abstract and controlled experimental designs to tease out the effects of different rhetorical

elements in top-down political discourses on the foreign policy preferences and political views of the Chinese public.

Despite these limitations, the findings of this chapter make important contributions to the scholarship on race politics, public opinion, and U.S.-China relations across different subfields in political science. First, the paper sheds light on the *transnational* implications of domestic racial politics by probing how anti-Asian discrimination in the United States feeds into the formation of foreign policy discourses and preferences in China. Second, the paper contributes to deepening our understanding of Chinese public opinion which has been identified as a key factor for policymaking and regime stability in China (King, Pan, and Roberts 2013; Weiss 2014). I pay particular attention to the dynamics of elite-public interactions by investigating the role top-down political narratives play in shaping political attitudes in China. Finally, my study highlights the underexamined *racial* politics of contemporary U.S.-China relations in which racial attitudes directly affect mass foreign policy views and thus can shape the range of policy options available to leaders in both countries. This study thus adds to the emerging scholarship on race and racism in international politics that has only recently begun to address the longstanding elision of race in IR (Bhambra et al. 2020; Shilliam 2020a; Shilliam 2020b; Zvobgo and Loken 2020; Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022). Future research that builds on the theoretical and empirical innovations of the present study will further advance our understanding of the most consequential, yet still poorly understood, dynamics of great power politics in the 21st century.

4.7 Acknowledgments

4.8 Appendix

Table C.1: Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
Female	.47	.50	0	1	2,007
Age	40.81	12.95	19	95	2,007
Han ethnic	.95	.21	0	1	2,007
College degree	.68	.47	0	1	2,007
Income	5.12	1.78	1	9	2,007
Political knowledge	.50	.42	0	1	2,007

Table C.2: Covariate balance

	Control	Treatment 1	Treatment 2	p-value
Female	.48	.45	.49	.42
Age	23.72	24.04	23.66	.85
Han ethnic	.96	.95	.95	.56
College degree	.69	.66	.69	.29
Income	5.05	5.05	5.26	.04
Political knowledge	.48	.52	.50	.14
Attention check	.95	.94	.96	.24
N	666	681	660	-

Note: Each cell shows the mean value for the covariate under each condition as well as the *p*-value from a one-way ANOVA test.

Table C.3: Experimental vignettes

The Yellow Peril Narrative Condition

<Anti-Asian racism and the American case for war on China>

According to USA Today on May 6th, a report from the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino shows there was a more than 164% increase in anti-Asian hate crimes reported to the police in the first quarter of 2021 in 16 major cities compared with last year. Brian Levin, author of the CSUSB report and a professor of criminal justice has tracked hate incidents for nearly 30 years. He points out that currently there is "a historic surge" of anti-Asian hate incidents in the US, and the rise in anti-Asian hate crime reports may get worse as COVID-19 restrictions lift. According to an organization called "Stop AAPI Hate," more than 6,600 hate incidents have been reported in the year after the pandemic began in the United States.

Long before Trump took office, xenophobia, anti-Asian racism, and Yellow Peril–style propaganda served as useful tools to advance American domestic and foreign policy goals. In recent decades, the defense industry has perfected this rhetoric to make the case for war on China; lawmakers in D.C. are bringing us to the brink of global conflict. As the enemy abroad becomes the enemy at home, Asian Americans at home once again the target of state and race brutality.

Yellow Peril produced US national shames such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, but the propaganda also supported US foreign policy. Today, Yellow Peril propaganda is bipartisan and mainstream. Critical to this contemporary promotion of Yellow Peril is the image of China as the military aggressor. But right now, the U.S. has 800 overseas military bases, half of them encircling China. The U.S. spends more on defense than the next 10 nations combined, including China. The U.S. has extensively planned for a naval blockade of China. The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command has stationed 130,000 troops in the region, conducting nearly daily military exercises with drones, missile drills, helicopters, island hopping and more, according to Madison Tang, campaign coordinator at CODEPINK. "These exercises can be provocations in and of themselves. There's a lot of military brinkmanship happening where American forward posturing [is being] framed as defensive," says Tang.

Elites in Washington have largely been successful in moving the public toward confrontation with China. Today, as Washington cynically promotes Yellow Peril as a strategy to pass major legislation at home and retain America supremacy abroad, Asian American and Pacific Islanders face increased surveillance, harassment, and attacks. While the federal government continues to sell its war on China, the author fears the coming violence against Asian communities in this country and in the rest of the world.

<针对亚裔的种族歧视和美国发动对华战争的推手>

据《今日美国报》网站 6 日报道,美国加利福尼亚州立大学圣贝纳迪诺分校下属的仇恨和极端主义研究中心报告显示,今年第一季度美国 16 座大城市警方收到的反亚裔仇恨犯罪报告比去年同期激增 164%。报告作者、刑事司法教授布莱恩·勒温近 30 年来一直跟踪研究仇恨事件。他指出,当前美国仇恨亚裔事件出现"历史性暴增",而且随着新冠肺炎疫情封锁措施的取消,仇恨亚裔犯罪事件可能会进一步增多。根据一家名为"停止针对亚裔和太平洋岛裔仇恨"的机构数据,美国发生疫情一年以来,共发生 6600 多起仇恨事件。

早在特朗普上台前,仇外心理、反亚裔种族主义和"黄祸"宣传就已成为推动美国国内和外交政策的有用工具。近几十年来,美国国防工业一再利用此类言论,为发动对华战争制造借口。华盛顿立法者把我们带到全球冲突边缘。国外敌人变成国内敌人,亚裔美国人再次沦为国家和种族暴力的目标。

Table C.3: Experimental vignettes, continued

"黄祸"论曾产生诸如《排华法案》这样的美国国耻,但这种宣传也支持了美国外交政策。如今,"黄祸"宣传变成两党共识和社会主流。当代宣传"黄祸"的关键,是要塑造中国作为军事侵略者的形象。但现在,美国有 800 个海外军事基地,其中一半是包围中国的。美国的军费比排在后面的 10 个国家(包括中国)总和还要多。美国大张旗鼓地计划对中国进行海上封锁。粉色代码组织的协调员麦迪逊·唐说,美国印太司令部在该地区驻扎 13 万军队,几乎每天都进行无人机、导弹、直升机、跳岛等军事演习,"这些演习本身就是挑衅行为。美国采取许多军事冒险政策,并把前沿部署说成是防御性的"。

华盛顿的政治精英们成功地将美国公众推向与中国的对抗面。今天,当华盛顿将"黄祸论"作为工具,以此来推动重大立法通过并在海内外鼓吹"美国优先",亚裔美国人和太平洋岛民受到更多的监视、骚扰和攻击。在美国政府继续推销对华战争论之际,笔者不禁担心在美国和世界其他地方针对华人的暴力升级即将到来。

The US Hypocrisy Narrative Condition

<Anti-Asian racism and the American hypocrisy>

According to USA Today on May 6th, a report from the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino shows there was a more than 164% increase in anti-Asian hate crimes reported to the police in the first quarter of 2021 in 16 major cities compared with last year. Brian Levin, author of the CSUSB report and a professor of criminal justice has tracked hate incidents for nearly 30 years. He points out that currently there is "a historic surge" of anti-Asian hate incidents in the US, and the rise in anti-Asian hate crime reports may get worse as COVID-19 restrictions lift. According to an organization called "Stop AAPI Hate," more than 6,600 hate incidents have been reported in the year after the pandemic began in the United States.

As shown by the surging anti-Asian hate crimes, the American society is deeply divided and ingrained with racial bias and hatred. Its political leaders have not only failed to promote social harmony but have often provoked social conflict by stoking racism for their own political benefits.

Without solving its own domestic problems, the U.S. is increasingly interfering in China's internal affairs in the name of human rights and democracy. The U.S. has hurled accusations at the Chinese government's recent deradicalization efforts in Xinjiang.

Xu Guixiang, a spokesperson for the regional government, said at a press conference that "long-arm jurisdiction" has become a hegemonic tool for the United States to suppress foreign entities, interfere in other countries' internal affairs and even subvert foreign governments. "The United States is always pointing a flashlight at others, but never at itself," said Xu in response to some U.S. politicians' attempts to push forward legislation on Xinjiang.

Zulhayat Ismayil, a professor at Xinjiang University, pointed out the U.S. poor racial record including bullying of Asian Americans and said, "with such serious issues at home, what right does the United States have to make irresponsible remarks about other countries' ethnic policies?"

Table C.3: Experimental vignettes, continued

<针对亚裔的种族主义和美式虚伪>

据《今日美国报》网站 6 日报道,美国加利福尼亚州立大学圣贝纳迪诺分校下属的仇恨和极端主义研究中心报告显示,今年第一季度美国 16 座大城市警方收到的反亚裔仇恨犯罪报告比去年同期激增 164%。报告作者、刑事司法教授布莱恩·勒温近 30 年来一直跟踪研究仇恨事件。他指出,当前美国仇恨亚裔事件出现"历史性暴增",而且随着新冠肺炎疫情封锁措施的取消,仇恨亚裔犯罪事件可能会进一步增多。根据一家名为"停止针对亚裔和太平洋岛裔仇恨"的机构数据,美国发生疫情一年以来,共发生 6600 多起仇恨事件。

针对亚裔的仇恨犯罪的激增展现出美国社会的严重分裂以及根深蒂固的种族偏见和种族仇恨。美国的政治领导者们不但没有推动社会和睦，还经常为了其自身政治利益鼓吹种族主义，激化社会矛盾。

美国非但没有着手解决其自身的国内问题，还越来越多地以人权和民主为借口干涉中国内政。美国近来一直大肆污蔑中国政府在新疆去极端化方面作出的努力。

新疆维吾尔自治区人民政府新闻发言人徐贵相在一个新闻发布会上说，长臂管辖已经成为了美国压迫别国、干扰他国内政、甚至颠覆他国政府的霸权主义工具。"美国一直攻击他国，却从来不顾自身种种人权劣迹，"徐贵相在回应一些美国政客试图推动有关新疆的立法的话题的时候说。

针对美国包括肆意欺凌亚裔美国人在内的劣迹斑斑的种族主义记录，新疆大学教授祖力亚提·司马以评论道，"面对如此严重的'种族灭绝'和种族歧视问题，美国还有什么资格对他国民族政策说三道四?美方应该先解决好自己国内问题，再'关心'世界的情况。"

The Control Condition

<Giant pandas, red pandas move into new houses at Chengdu's panda breeding facility>

The extended part of the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding (written as "the base" below) is scheduled to open to the public for test operations in early 2022. During the test operation, public will have access to two areas - the "Infinite Hill" and the "Adventure Valley" - which include in total 11 giant panda pavilions and multiple touring cites such as education workshop and pedestrian street.

The "Infinite Hill" will include 4 giant panda and 1 red panda pavilions – "Xuri Pavilion" "Yingri Pavilion" "Yunri Pavilion" "Shengri Pavilion" and "Hill Red Panda Pavilion"; the "Adventure Valley" will include 7 giant panda pavilions - "Shanyue Pavilion" "Yunyue Pavilion" "Qiuyue Pavilion" "Wangyue Pavilion" "Mingyue Pavilion" "Jiangyue Pavilion" "Lanyue Pavilion". The base started the move from November 2021 with due consideration for animal welfare.

It is said that in this November, the base launched disinfection within the extended areas to ensure animal epidemic control. The base tailored disinfection methods, types and recipes of disinfectant for different locations. Shortly after finishing disinfecting, the move started. Around 40 giant pandas and 10 red pandas have moved into "new houses" built in a newly extended area.

Table C.3: Experimental vignettes, continued

After moving into new houses, due to individual differences among animals and change in environment, some giant panda exhibits different levels of stress response. The base reacted immediately with various mitigation strategy, such as sending zookeepers to appease. As of now, most giant pandas have been accustomed to the new environment.

It is introduced that the covering 169 hectares, the extension will bring the total area of the base to 238 hectares in total. Based on that, the base will continue its three major roles surrounding giant panda's research and conservation, education, and cultural tourism. The goal is to build a tier-one world-class giant panda conservation base, to further apply its research advantages, and to dig deeper into its values of education, ecology, culture, tourism, etc.

<成都熊猫基地大、小熊猫乔迁新居>

成都大熊猫繁育研究基地（以下简称"熊猫基地"）扩建区计划于 2022 年年初预开园。本次预开园，熊猫基地将对公众开放"无限山丘"和"冒险溪谷"两个区域，共计 11 个大熊猫参观场馆，以及多个科普场馆、游客步行街等多个参观游览场所。

其中，"无限山丘"将包含"旭日馆""映日馆""云日馆""胜日馆""山丘小熊猫馆"4 个大熊猫场馆和 1 个小熊猫场馆；"冒险溪谷"包含"山月馆""云月馆""秋月馆""望月馆""明月馆""江月馆""揽月馆"7 个大熊猫兽舍。2021 年 11 月起，熊猫基地在尊重动物福利的基础上陆续启动了大、小熊猫搬家工作。

据悉，今年 11 月起，为确保动物疫病防控安全，熊猫基地启动了扩建区消杀工作。针对不同类型的场地和区域，严格按照相关消杀方式、消毒液种类及其配比开展消杀工作，在完成了全部消杀工作后，大、小熊猫搬家工作也陆续启动，将有 40 只左右的大熊猫和 10 只左右的小熊猫入住扩建区"新家"。

搬家后，由于动物个体差异和饲养环境变化，部分大熊猫产生了不同程度的应激反应。成都大熊猫基地对此立即开展各项应对措施，通过饲养人员安抚等多种手段缓解应激。截至目前，已搬家的大多数大熊猫都适应了新的环境。

据了解，熊猫基地扩建区面积为 2535 亩，扩建完毕后，成都熊猫基地总面积达 3570 亩。在此基础上，熊猫基地将继续围绕大熊猫科研繁育、科普教育、文化旅游等三大职能职责，以全面建成世界一流的大熊猫保护基地为目标，进一步发挥科研优势，深入挖掘科普、生态、文化、旅游等领域价值。

Table C.4: Survey questions

How old are you?
  o   Answered with a dropdown menu (Less than 18 – More than 95)

你的年龄是?

What is your gender?
  o   Female
  o   Male

请问你的性别是?

  o   女
  o   男

Which ethnic group do you belong to?
  o   Han ethnic group
  o   Minority group

你的民族是?

  o   汉族
  o   少数民族

What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?
  o   Less than high school
  o   High school graduate
  o   Some college, no degree
  o   2-year degree
  o   4-year degree
  o   Postgraduate degree (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, etc)

请问你的最高学历或受教育水平是?

  o   低于高中
  o   高中、职高毕业
  o   高校肄业
  o   专科学历
  o   本科学历
  o   硕士及以上

What is the sum of your household disposable income per month (including salaries, allowance, living expenses)?
  o   Below 1,000 yuan
  o   1,000-2,000 yuan
  o   2,001-3,000 yuan
  o   3,001-5,000 yuan
  o   5,001-8,000 yuan
  o   8,001-12,000 yuan
  o

Table C.4: Survey questions, continued

- o 12,001-20,000 yuan
- o 20,001-50,000 yuan
- o More than 50,000 yuan

您家庭每月的可支配收入总和（包括工资、津贴、生活费等）大约是多少？

- o 1,000 元以下
- o 1,000-2,000 元
- o 2,001-3,000 元
- o 3,001-5,000 元
- o 5,001-8,000 元
- o 8,001-12,000 元
- o 12,001-20,000 元
- o 20,001-50,000 元
- o 高于 50,000 元

Which of the following is the current Prime Minister of the United Kingdom? (If you are not certain, choose "Not sure.")

- o Tony Blair
- o David Cameron
- o Theresa May
- o Boris Johnson
- o Not sure

以下选项中，哪位是现任英国首相？【若您感到不确定，请选择"不清楚"】

- o 托尼·布莱尔
- o 戴维·卡梅伦
- o 特雷莎·梅
- o 鲍里斯·约翰逊
- o 不清楚

Which of the following is not a permanent member of the United Nations? (If you are not certain, choose "Not sure.")

- o United States
- o China
- o Russia
- o Germany
- o United Kingdom
- o Not sure

以下哪个选项不是联合国常任理事国？【若您感到不确定，请选择"不清楚"】

- o 美国
- o 中国
- o 俄罗斯
- o 德国
- o 英国
- o 不清楚

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

Anti-Asian racism, deeply rooted in the development and sustainment of American racial hierarchy, has long subjected innocent and helpless individuals to socio-political marginalization and racialized violence within American society. Anti-Asian racism, however, does not "stop at the water's edge" (Milner and Tingley 2016). In my dissertation, I demonstrated the far-reaching *transnational* implications of domestic anti-Asian racism, focusing on its important role in configuring American and Chinese foreign policy discourses and public opinion. My research therefore suggests that "the personal is international," as emphasized by Cynthia Enloe in her groundbreaking work on a critical feminist analysis of international politics (Enloe 1989). By integrating theories of race and international hierarchy, I proposed that race and racism, commonly treated as domestic and essentially personal matters in IR, are closely intertwined with the fundamental structure and dynamics of world politics in general and contemporary U.S.-China relations in particular. Future studies that integrate race into theories and empirical studies of international politics will bring a more profound, realistic, and powerful understanding of the prospect of war and peace in the 21st century (also see Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022).

Finally, I would like to underscore the policy implications and broader societal impact of my dissertation. By demonstrating the centrality of race and racialized sentiments in the formation of American and Chinese foreign policy public opinion, my research highlighted the under-examined *racial* politics of contemporary U.S.-China rivalry. Speaking to latest scholarship on the role of elite rhetoric and elite-public interactions in the politics of foreign policymaking (Berinsky and Kinder 2006; Berinsky 2007; Saunders 2015; Guisinger and Saunders 2017), my dissertation suggests that inflammatory foreign policy rhetoric – which has become increasingly popular in

both countries – may exacerbate the worsening Sino-American great power competition by provoking deep-seated racial resentment and inflated threat perceptions among American and Chinese publics. My bleak findings in this dissertation call for renewed attention on mitigating Sino-American tensions by avoiding unnecessarily hostile – and racially charged – foreign policy rhetoric in both countries (also see Chow 2021).

My research will also be a valuable resource to scholars, activists, and policymakers who work on the urgent issues of racial justice in the United States. Previous research on American racial politics has tended to focus mainly on racial discrimination against African Americans, failing to conceptualize the specific contents, origins, and consequences of resentment against other ethnic and racial minorities in an increasingly diverse America. As a result, conventional measures of racism have been ill-equipped to fully capture anti-Hispanic, anti-Muslim as well as anti-Asian sentiments which have become widespread and politically consequential in the United States (Hajnal and Rivera 2014; Abrajano and Hajnal 2017; Lajevardi and Abrajano 2019). My dissertation research provides a theoretical basis and empirical assessment of new measures of anti-Asian sentiments, which can be widely adopted by scholars and organizations fielding surveys and interviews on public attitudes toward Asian Americans, the fastest growing minority population in the U.S. (Budiman and Ruiz 2021). A research program building on my dissertation, therefore, will help produce robust empirical evidence on the configuration of racial attitudes toward Asians and establish an accurate assessment of the prevalence and severity of anti-Asian racism in today's American society.

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