VICTIMS AND PATRIOTS:
DISAGGREGATING NATIONALISM IN CHINA

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Much work in political science has highlighted the dangers which strong nationalist sentiments can pose to a regime and its neighbors. Nationalism and the construction of loyalty to the state have been posited to have numerous links to interstate war, to undergird violent processes of state-building or the militant behavior of transitioning regimes, and to influence the foreign policies of great powers.¹ Basic questions remain unanswered, however. For instance, the concept of “nationalism” includes many different aspects of an individual citizen’s thoughts and beliefs regarding his or her country, state, or people.² Pride in the accomplishments of one’s country is unlikely to be coterminous with interstate enmities or irredentist territorial desires, and nation-building that draws on contrasts with other nations may serve the domestic purpose of state building.³ However, such disparate concepts are still often obscured under the single heading of “nationalism.” Instead, the ways in which citizens identify with their nation-state are distinct from their beliefs about the appropriate form of their country’s external relations, though both may be informed by “nationalist” concerns like ethnicity, group identity, collective histories of peace or conflict and so on. Can different strands of thought be distinguished empirically in the population, and what are their sources?

The case of China is particularly well-suited to examining such questions, for a variety of reasons. First, it has become axiomatic in the China field that rising nationalism influences Chinese foreign policy, primarily by presenting a threat to the ruling Communist Party’s legitimacy.⁴ This relationship makes a deeper understanding of Chinese domestic nationalism highly salient to the questions currently receiving so much attention in international relations and

² Hechter 200, Davidov 2011.
policy circles. Perhaps only certain aspects of “nationalism” are likely to present a strong threat to the state, or perhaps different aspects of nationalist belief have conflicting or catalyzing effects on Chinese foreign policy. Second, the PRC combines a very rapid increase in domestic prosperity, international capabilities, and associated national pride with reliance on a legitimating nationalist ideology tightly linked to China’s history of victimization in the international arena. Indeed, some have argued that Chinese nationalism essentially is a set of beliefs about foreign relations. For that reason, highly nationalistic individuals should view international relations with the same analytical perspective as the CCP, providing a useful proxy for a specific strand of nationalism different from patriotic pride in one’s country. Third, the broader literature on strands of nationalist thought in comparative politics has often excluded China due to the difficulties of data collection, political considerations, and language barriers. These studies have usually divided nationalism into “good” or “constructive” patriotism and “bad” or “chauvinistic” nationalism, a divide that roughly approximates our distinction between patriotic pride and the narrative of victimization. The PRC thus presents a case that is not only intrinsically important, but which helps fill a gap in the literature by testing the applicability of theories previously developed on the basis of the Western world to the largest and most important non-Western country.

Within Chinese studies, the source of popular nationalism in whatever form has engendered an unresolved debate. Some China watchers hold the view that nationalism is primarily the product of the state’s initiative, conveyed through the media and education system. According to this line of thinking, the Chinese public has internalized the victimization narrative

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alluded to above because they have been repeatedly exposed to it in schools and the media. As a result, they both accept the state’s critique of foreign meddling in China’s internal affairs and broadly agree with the state’s emphasis on the improving material conditions in China despite certain well-publicized difficulties with corruption, the environment and so on. In sharp contrast to this viewpoint, others argue that Chinese nationalism is not a product of the state but rather of popular thinking, spread through best-selling books and media appearances by public intellectuals espousing nationalistic sentiments. From this perspective, nationalism is a double-edged sword: it can produce support for the state against foreign foes, but can also turn against the state for not defending national interests vigilantly enough. Foreign policy decision makers are said to be constrained by an aroused society, forcing them to take actions that are more assertive and even more aggressive than they would prefer.

Unfortunately, the type of large-scale survey work required to assess public attitudes cannot easily divide variables into “state” and “society.” Individual beliefs may be critically important to explaining nationalism, but are these beliefs the product of state education or personal predilection? Similarly, even something as seemingly straightforward as Communist Party membership cannot be placed in one category or the other. Party membership may well increase one’s sense of patriotism, but perhaps individuals become patriotic for reasons not driven by the state and then seek to join the Party. These problems are not easily resolved at the large-n level.

We therefore take a somewhat different approach. First, and most importantly, are different strands of nationalism not only conceptually different but also empirically distinct in China? Second, do these different strands of nationalism among the general public have

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10 Christensen 2011
similar or different underlying causes? If their causes appear to differ, then state mobilization alone is unlikely to provide a convincing explanation for the full range of nationalist expression in the PRC whether or not we can convincingly claim that individual variables reflect “state” or “society” explanations. Our aim in this paper is therefore to use empirical data to give us a more nuanced view of exactly what constitutes “nationalism” in China and to highlight the factors most important for explaining such beliefs. In order to do so, we break our explanatory variables down into three major clusters that draw on existing literature: attitudes, material factors, and access to information.

Using a nationwide representative survey of urban Chinese residents, we find that these two important aspects of nationalism – pride in one’s country and acceptance of conflict-oriented state narratives of foreign affairs – can indeed be analytically separated. Moreover, the correlates of these two beliefs are categorically different, providing strong support for the argument that state propaganda alone cannot account for nationalist attitudes and expressions among Chinese citizens.

Varieties of Nationalism: Causes and Consequences

Nationalism is a concept common to both the international relations and comparative politics literature in political science. On the one hand, it can create a common identity that creates both cohesion within society and support for the state.\textsuperscript{11} This benign form of nationalism is often equated with patriotism, and is particularly common in the comparative politics and state building literature.\textsuperscript{12} This form of nationalism can be a source of popular support for the regime as people take pride in the country’s achievements, especially when the state is believed

\textsuperscript{11} In this paper, we do not address subnational or cross-national ethnic politics, where differences between groups creates conflict, at the extreme leading to civil war and the dissolution of the state.\textsuperscript{12} Anderson 1991, Gellner 1983, Tilly 1993
responsible for those achievements. On the other hand, nationalism can create feelings of superiority or resentment towards the government and people of other countries. This variant of nationalism can create tensions with other countries, and can bolster rival claims to contested territory. This more malign form of nationalism is of particular interest to IR scholars because it may lead to international or civil conflict.\(^\text{13}\) The difference between the two types can be succinctly summarized as in-group pride versus antagonism toward the out-group.

In a similar fashion, rising nationalism can put pressure on governments to take more assertive actions, and can reduce support for the regime if it does not act in ways that nationalists desire. While Fearon and Laitin have argued that these sentiments are manufactured or at least manipulated by political elites to foster support for their agenda, the study of Chinese politics portrays nationalism as a double-edged sword: it can create support for the state, but can also turn into anti-government protests when the state appears weak or willing to compromise with foreign countries. In China’s modern history, nationalism has often been the trigger for popular protests and political resistance, such as the May 4\(^{\text{th}}\) Movement, the resistance to Japan during WW II, and anti-Japanese and anti-American protests in recent decades.\(^\text{14}\) The state has created a narrative of victimization to describe modern China’s experience with foreign countries, beginning with the Opium Wars and continuing up to the present. Criticism of China’s policies towards Taiwan, Tibet, Xinjiang, human rights and even economic practices and challenges to China’s territorial claims are decried as recent manifestations of meddling by foreign powers.

Although many have noted rising nationalism in China, the distinction between different concepts of nationalism often gets lost. Yet, as recently as the 2008 Olympics, both aspects of nationalism were clearly on display before the entire world. Chinese citizens felt pride in their


country’s status as host, gleaming stadium architecture, and position at the top of the gold medal count even as many displayed intense anger over negative portrayals of China in the international media and the politicization of the opening ceremonies and Olympic torch relay. Is it possible to empirically distinguish between these different concepts?

To help answer these questions, we draw upon an original nationwide survey of Chinese cities conducted in fall 2010 (see appendix for details). As part of this survey, we included a variety of questions concerning nationalism, both about the victimization narrative and patriotic sentiments. These questions and our interpretations of the results were done in consultation with colleagues in China.

Previous research by Peter Gries and his colleagues also found a distinction between patriotism and anti-foreign and victimization sentiments (which they refer to as nationalism).¹⁵ They focused on comparisons between the Chinese and American samples (specifically, that patriotic Americans are more likely to be nationalistic, but that patriotic Chinese and nationalistic Chinese are distinct groups) and how patriotism and nationalism influence foreign policy preferences. In contrast, our study is designed to find the micro-foundations of nationalism by exploring the correlates of the two different types of nationalism. Whereas their study was based on small samples of Chinese and US college students, we extend the analysis to the general population. As they rightly note, “Replication is a fundamental principle of the scientific method” (10). In this case, different methods lead to similar conclusions, creating greater confidence in the findings. In addition, we hope to make an additional contribution by extending the analysis to the general population and focusing on the causes as much as the consequences of these two distinctive forms of nationalism.

To assess whether respondents held foreign policy views that reflected the victimization orientation, we posed a series of questions on international affairs (see table 1, part A). In designing these questions, we had several goals in mind. First, we wanted to pose questions that tapped into the general orientation, rather than ask about the specific actions of specific countries. For this reason, we used the more generic terms “major powers” and “strong countries.” According to our Chinese colleagues who helped us design the questionnaire and then implemented the survey, most Chinese do not see China as a major power – a rising power perhaps, but not yet a major power. Therefore, responses to these questions are most appropriately interpreted as acceptance of or objection to the actions of other countries, not their own.

Second, we wanted to pose questions that would not be politically sensitive, leading respondents to refuse to answer. The four questions that we use to measure the victim orientation had response rates of between 85.2 and 86.7 percent. In contrast, the questions measuring patriotism, in table 1, part B, had response rates of just over 93 percent. The relatively lower response rates for the victimization questions are mostly likely due to the generic quality of the questions rather than their sensitivity. Elsewhere in the questionnaire we asked respondents, “when you chat with others and criticize the central government, are you apprehensive?” Regardless of whether they were very apprehensive, somewhat apprehensive, or not apprehensive when criticizing the government, they had similar response rates on the four victimization questions. From this, we are confident that respondents were not afraid to answer these four questions.
### Table 1: Nationalist Sentiments in China
(values represent percentages of respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Victimization Sentiments</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. International affairs should be decided by major countries.</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>17.09</td>
<td>60.93</td>
<td>18.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>国际事务应该由大国来解决</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Strong countries can do whatever they want, other countries are helpless.</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>11.64</td>
<td>53.39</td>
<td>33.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>强国想做什么就做什么，其他国无能为力</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When a country pursues its own interests, it need not care whether other countries support it.</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>14.72</td>
<td>57.60</td>
<td>25.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>一个国家在追求自己的利益的时候，不用管其他国家支持不支持</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In order to preserve peace, it is acceptable to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>17.53</td>
<td>52.47</td>
<td>27.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>为了保障和平，干涉其他国家的内政是可以接受的</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Patriotic Sentiments</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Generally speaking, China is better than most other countries.</td>
<td>14.43</td>
<td>60.84</td>
<td>21.61</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>总的来说中国比其他大部分国家都好</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. When other people criticize China, it is as though they are criticizing me.</td>
<td>21.57</td>
<td>58.78</td>
<td>16.41</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>别人批评中国时我感觉他们也批评我自己</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Even if I could pick any country in the world, I still want to be a Chinese citizen.</td>
<td>26.43</td>
<td>57.53</td>
<td>12.86</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>即使可以选择任何国家我也更愿意做中国公民</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, we wanted to ask questions that would not cue the respondents to give the politically correct answer. For this reason, we avoided using politically or ideologically loaded phrases. However, to have greater confidence that these questions truly reflected a victimization orientation similar to the one promoted by the state, the last question included the phrase “interfere in the internal affairs.” Criticism of foreign countries that “interfere in the internal affairs” of China is a staple in official statements. As a consequence, the more that respondents disagree with this and the other three statements, the more they can be said to view foreign affairs through the victimization narrative that is prominent in the official Chinese rhetoric on international affairs. In the analysis below, we will examine how prevalent this victimization narrative is among urban Chinese, and what factors account for variations in these responses.

In the same survey, we also asked questions to measure the type of nationalism that is best understood as patriotism (see table 1, part B). The four questions in part A and those in part B seem to be mirror images of each other: strong majorities disagree with each of the questions in the first set, but agree with those in the second set. This apparent difference is confirmed with pairwise correlations. The questions in part A have correlations between .48 and .60; in part B, between .51 and .63. However, the two sets of questions are almost completely uncorrelated with each other: between part A and part B, all pairwise correlations are .05 or below. In other words, the two sets of questions tap into different underlying concepts that are not correlated with each other. People who are strongly patriotic do not necessarily view China as the victim of major powers. In the analysis below, we treat these two types of nationalism as distinctly different concepts and measure their correlates separately.

What accounts for this disparity between views on international affairs and patriotic sentiments? In a more general sense, what kinds of political, economic, and cultural variables
explain the attitudes of urban Chinese towards these different types of nationalism? Do the survey data support either the state mobilization or societal origins argument on Chinese nationalism? To answer these questions, we next introduce our explanatory variables and propose hypotheses about their impact on the dependent variables – support for the victimization narrative and patriotic pride, respectively.

**Specification of Variables and Hypotheses**

**Dependent Variables:**

In our analysis of these nationalist sentiments, we generate two dependent variables, each an index of the questions in table 1:

**Victim:** Our first dependent variable consists of an index of the four questions referencing foreign affairs. “Disagree” responses are scored as high, while “agree” responses are scored as low. A higher score on this index indicates that the respondent more strongly opposes great power exploitation of other countries, and hence implicitly agrees more strongly with the dominant CCP narrative of recent Chinese history.

**Patriot:** Our second dependent variable is an index of the three questions in Table 1 part B, probing how strongly the respondent identifies with the Chinese nation and whether he or she believes China to be comparatively better than other countries. For these three questions, responses were inverted so that “agree” responses have higher scores. As a consequence, higher scores on the index indicate more patriotism.
Each of these two dependent variables is intended to capture a different strand of nationalism in the PRC. If the distinction between such aspects is unimportant, reflecting a single "patriotic" attitude, then we would expect the results of each model to highly resemble one another. If, on the other hand, these different aspects of nationalism in fact represent independent concepts, then the independent variables in our two models should exhibit significantly different relationships with each dependent variable: variables that help explain perceived victimization should not necessarily influence patriotism. Similarly, if nationalism is predominately a product of state propaganda, then we would expect the two attitudes to reflect the same sources. A contrary result would cast doubt on a simplistic state-sponsored nationalism argument, indicating that state propaganda alone cannot explain the full range of "nationalist" attitudes in modern China.

**Independent Variables:**

In our analytical model, we include three different clusters of variables that represent accepted influences on nationalist sentiment in the literature: attitudinal factors, material factors, and access to information. In addition, a fourth cluster includes a set of demographic control variables. Each of these clusters and their components are described below.

*Attitudinal Factors:*

Attitudinal factors focus on an individual's broader outlook on politics and society. Political ideals or conceptions of appropriate social and authority relationships may naturally be expected to influence one's pride in the state and acceptance of its values,
depending on the compatibility of state actions and values with one’s own preexisting views. Such factors have been used in previous studies of nationalism and its effects, and an extensive literature has studied the role of “authoritarian personalities” or moral outlooks on views over issues areas such as foreign policy.\textsuperscript{16} We break attitudinal factors down into three variables, each a three-question index.

First, \textit{Pluralist} measures whether the respondent believes that a multi-party system, the existence of diverse non-governmental organizations, and public demonstrations threaten social stability. High values indicate a stronger belief that a plurality of ideas and organizations does not negatively impact stability. We expect more pluralist individuals to be at odds with the CCP in general due to its explicit monopolization of power and therefore anticipate a negative relationship with both dependent variables.

Next, our \textit{Traditional} variable measures a respondent’s support for traditional family and social structures. Specifically, these include children’s compliance with even unreasonable demands from parents, seeking the input of elders to resolve disputes, and a wife’s respecting the wishes of her mother-in-law. We believe that traditional values might indicate a greater likelihood of accepting mainstream interpretations of history and the dominant CCP narrative of victimization, meaning that more traditional values will correlate with higher scores on \textit{Victim}. On the other hand, we have no major expectation for a potential relationship with patriotic pride.

Finally, our \textit{Deference} variable measures to what degree the respondent believes government decisions ought to be obeyed even if they are wrong, whether individuals should support the government’s decisions even if they disagree, and if government leaders

should be obeyed like heads of families. These questions refer to government in the abstract, not specifically to the CCP. We anticipate that high levels of deference should correlate with greater support for the victimization narrative and higher levels of patriotism.

Material Factors:

Material variables look to economics as an explanation for political beliefs. The well-known belief that the Chinese state relies on economic growth to increase popular support is a typical example of this type of argument. If this is the case, then individuals with higher incomes, favorable changes in their income, or greater overall satisfaction with their quality of life ought to show more patriotic pride and may be more open to agreeing with the state's narratives. We measure material factors with the four variables below.

First, Life Satisfaction indicates measure's respondents' satisfaction with their life overall on the basis of a single, direct question. We anticipate that this variable will be positively associated with both dependent variables, since those most satisfied with life under the CCP are likely to be least skeptical of its narratives and – to the extent that they credit the CCP’s policies for their satisfaction – also to be more patriotic.

Second, we include the variable Income Level, which measures the respondents' perceived level of family income relative to others in their respective cities. The question was worded this way for two reasons: people tend to assess their level of prosperity based on how they compare with others in their communities, not by how they compare with national distributions of income, and people are reluctant to reveal their actual incomes in

17 Chen 2004, Gilley 2008, Wright 2010
a survey setting. All else being equal, we expect income level to correlate with patriotism but have no expectation for its relationship with the victim narrative.

Last, we examine changes in individual income using two variables. *Retrospective Income Gains* measures a respondent's perception that his or her income was higher at the time of the survey than five years before, while *Prospective Income Gains* indicates whether or not respondents expect their income to rise in the years ahead. As before, we expect that past income gains and optimism about the future will increase patriotism, but have no basis for predicting whether or not these two measures will influence support for the victim narrative.

**Access to Information:**

Our third cluster of independent variables looks at respondents’ access to information not under the direct control of the state. In China, such sources include both the commercial media and the Internet. While each is subject to censorship and state influence, each also offers a freer informational space in which motivated individuals can seek out news, reporting, and discussions that are not simply mouthpieces for state interests. The Internet, especially, has been highlighted as a site of independent political activity and mobilization in the PRC.\(^{18}\)

Access to each of these informational sources is measured by a single variable. First, *Uses Internet* records whether or not the respondent used the Internet to express his/her personal opinion on politics or related topics in the past three years. Second, *Commercial Media* attempts to capture media commercialization by province, measuring per capita

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\(^{18}\) One of many examples is Lagerkvist (2005). See also Reilly (2012) on an independent role for Chinese media.
spending on advertisement in 1,000 RMB/person.\textsuperscript{19} Media that are more commercialized tend to be more active and vibrant in order to attract more readers and therefore more advertising income. As a result, they are less constrained by state controls over their content than the official media. In general, we anticipate that those with higher measures on these two variables will tend to have greater exposure to alternative information, decreasing adherence to the victim narrative.

\textit{Demographic Factors:}

Previous studies have noted a number of relationships between these variables and various strands of nationalism in previous cross-national studies.\textsuperscript{20} Demographic controls in this study therefore include dummy variables for gender, ethnicity (Han or minority), some high school education, some college education, age cohort, and finally Chinese Communist Party membership.\textsuperscript{21} In general terms, those who are male, less educated, older, and of the majority ethnic grouping have been found by previous research to express the strongest nationalist sentiments empirically. We expect these patterns to hold in China.\textsuperscript{22}

Our models therefore compare conditions in China to these broader findings, but also make two important extensions for the Chinese context. First, the inclusion of a dummy variable for membership in the Communist Party allows us to control for the nearly

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} We would like to thank Daniella Stockman for generously providing us with these data.
\item \textsuperscript{20} See especially Smith and Kim (2006) and Davidov (2011). On gender, see also Morales (2010). On education, see also Gallagher et al. (2009).
\item \textsuperscript{21} Formally, these variables are\textit{ CCP, Male, Han, High School, College, Cultural Revolution Generation, Early Reform Generation,} and \textit{Post-1992 Generation.}
\item \textsuperscript{22} On the role of ethnicity in nationalism, it is worth noting here that the survey was not conducted in Tibet or Xinjiang, the areas within China where ethnic politics has been most intense and occasionally violent. Those tensions prevented the implementation of this survey in those areas. Our \textit{Han} variable therefore captures only minority individuals living in Han-majority areas of prefecture-level or provincial-level cities.
\end{itemize}
80 million individuals in China with an explicit organizational connection to the state. We expect these individuals to be more patriotic than others, but this possibility has not been tested previously. Second, we use a set of four cohorts (three cohort dummy variables) as an alternative measure of age, which we believe better captures China’s tumultuous recent history better than a simple age and age$^2$ term to test for a linear or curvilinear relationship. These cohorts divide China’s population into a “founding” generation who came of age as young adults before or during the first years of the People’s Republic, a “Cultural Revolution” generation who grew up in the chaos that began in the middle 1960s, an “early reform” generation shaped by the transition to a market economy in the late 1970s and 1980s as well as the Tiananmen crisis, and finally a “post-1992” generation whose dominant experience has been two decades of breakneck economic growth.

During informal interviews in China, we often hear that nationalism varies sharply by age: those who are youngest and oldest are the most nationalistic, particularly when it comes to holding anti-foreign sentiments. We expect this pattern to be reflected in our models.

**Results**

One of the issues that bedevils survey research is missing data caused by non-responses to individual questions. In multivariate analysis, if a respondent does not answer every question in the model, then that respondent is dropped from the model, even on questions where he or she did provide a response. For analysts, this presents a dilemma: either we exclude some variables in order to maximize the number of observations, but at the risk of omitted variable bias, or we

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23 Note that running the models with a standard age and age$^2$ term in order to capture linear or curvilinear relationships indicates the same pattern as that shown in the final analysis of our cohort variables.

24 In our models, the “founding” generation is used as the base grouping to which the other three cohorts are compared.
include as many theoretically relevant variables as possible, but at the risk of dropping
observations and creating the potential for selection bias.

One solution to this problem is estimating the missing data using multiple imputation.\footnote{\textit{King, et al, 2001}} The benefit of multiple imputation is that it allows us to avoid both the problems of omitted variables and selection bias from listwise deletion because all observations are retained. The potential downside is that estimating missing data reduces standard errors, and thus may exaggerate the strength of relationships between variables.\footnote{\textit{Other problems inherent to multiple imputation concern the nature of the missing data, such as whether respondents did not answer a question because they truly did not know the answer or if the responses are not normally distributed. More informed discussion can be found in Rubin 1987 and King, et al 2001.}} But the benefits generally outweigh the costs, and in the analysis below we estimate a model using data derived from nine rounds of imputation using the program “Amelia II: A Program for Missing Data” developed by Gary King and his colleagues.\footnote{\textit{For more info and full documentation on Amelia II, see Honaker et al 2007.}} The multiple regression analysis incorporates estimates from all nine rounds of imputation, and uses the “mim” software module running within Stata.\footnote{\textit{This module allows the estimation of imputed data which has been appended and indexed to generate a single data file. For further information, documentation, and the “mim” module itself, see Galati, et al 2010.}} The results of these estimated models are presented in tables 2 and 3, and include all the explanatory and control variables described above. In these models, we also include survey weights to correct for design effects.
Table 2: Model Results – Victims and Patriots
(OLS regression coefficients with standard errors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Victims</th>
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<th>Patriots</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudinal Factors</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pluralist</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>-.206***</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>-.116*</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.105**</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deference</td>
<td>-.285***</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.356***</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Material Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.151***</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Level</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>-.163***</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrospective Income Gains</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective Income Gains</td>
<td>-.208*</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>-.283***</td>
<td>.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access to Information</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses Internet</td>
<td>.904***</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Media</td>
<td>-.337**</td>
<td>.124</td>
<td>-.000</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographic Controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>.243*</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-.101</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>-.134</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Han</td>
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<td>.618</td>
<td>4.99***</td>
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*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

At a glance, it is clear that these two aspects of nationalism represent empirically distinct concepts. Eight of the explanatory variables are significant in one model but not the other. Two variables are significant in both models, but have opposite signs: the two attitudinal variables that are positively correlated with Patriots are negatively related to Victims; in other words, values that promote patriotism reduce the anti-foreign sentiments associated with the
victimization narrative. Only one variable has a consistent impact on the two strands of nationalism: those who expect their incomes to rise in the near future (prospective income gains) are less likely to be either victims or patriots. If Victims and Patriots were related concepts, the explanatory variables would have similar effects in both models. The fact that the variables have such dissimilar effects reinforces the observation from Table 1: these are distinctly different strands of nationalism, conceptually as well as empirically. In order to understand properly the causes of rising nationalism in China and its possible implications, we must begin with the recognition that Victims and Patriots are not simply two sides of the same coin, but two separate and distinct types of nationalists.

We turn now to analysis of the individual variable results in our model, beginning with the attitudinal factors. The first, Pluralist, had a negative effect on patriotism but no significant relationship with the victimization narrative. This result makes good intuitive sense: individuals who hold pluralist beliefs naturally view China’s one-party state less favorably than the general population, but such beliefs are not necessarily related to one’s perspective on international relations. The second, Traditional, measured an individual’s preference for traditional social relations. This variable was significantly and negatively associated with the respondent’s level of agreement with the government’s victimization narrative, while significantly and positively related to the respondent’s patriotism. The results are contrary to our original expectations. Here, the difference between the domestic and international political contexts may be key to understanding the observed relationship. For instance, traditional opinions on social topics such as the respect due to elders or appropriate family structures may have less to do with whether someone is amenable to CCP propaganda and more to do with how one views the world generally – as a world of individual actors deserving of equal respect, or as a world in which the
more experienced, stronger, and traditionally preponderant actors dominate the behavior of others. To the extent that respondents hold such a general orientation, it may explain the observed significant relationship between opinions on two seemingly disparate aspects of politics. We examine this in more detail in the Analysis section below.

The final attitudinal variable, *Deference*, measures an individual’s tendency to defer to the government and to trust central authority. *Deference* shows a strong, negative association in the *Victims* model, and a strong, positive association in the *Patriots* model. The former relationship presents a major challenge: why should individuals who are most deferential to government exhibit a strong inclination to disagree with the government’s victimization narrative? One possible answer refers back to the questions themselves: both the dependent variable index and *Deference* index questions focused not on specific policies but rather on general beliefs about how political actors “should” behave. If respondents’ answers reflect an underlying political orientation that they apply across issue areas, then deference to strong central authority may coexist with support for the “right” of great powers to dominate international relations as observed in our data. In this view, those with certain pre-existing political beliefs are most likely to view international affairs in this way without regard for state narratives or preferences.

The next set of variables concerns material factors. *Life Satisfaction* has a positive and statistically significant coefficient in the *Patriots* model, but has a tiny and not significant coefficient in the *Victims* model. This result should again be unsurprising: satisfaction with quality of life has a much stronger link to pride in one’s country and identification with the state than it does to beliefs about the behavior of foreign countries.
The indicators of individual prosperity are broken down into three component measures: the respondents’ relative level of wealth compared to their neighbors (Income Level), increased income in recent years (Retrospective Income Gains), and expectations for income gains in the near future (Prospective Income Gains). Retrospective Income Gains is not related with either model.\textsuperscript{29} However, the other two indicators of individual prosperity are highly significant and negatively correlated with the Patriots model. This finding runs opposite conventional wisdom, which is that greater prosperity should directly lead to higher levels of patriotism. Furthermore, Prospective Income Gains is also negatively and significantly correlated with support for the victimization narrative, demonstrating that the negative linkage extends in part to both aspects of nationalism. In fact, this is the only explanatory variable that has the same sign and is statistically significant for both models. The explanation for this robust finding is not obvious, especially considering that it pits wealth directly against life satisfaction. It is certainly plausible, for instance, that individuals with higher incomes and higher expectations for income might tend to be those who are also most cosmopolitan in their thinking, but that the effect should be so strong and run against basic intuition suggests that some other mechanism links the most prosperous to less nationalist attitudes. Perhaps those least fortunate materially take comfort from proud identification with a strong and rising state, or have less exposure to media other than the official media. Further research will be needed to resolve this question.

The third set of explanatory variables focuses on respondents’ access to different types of information, particularly outside the state’s direct control. Uses Internet captures whether a respondent uses the Internet to discuss political affairs. In fact, Internet use is very strongly and positively correlated with support for the victimization narrative, perhaps reflecting the views of

\textsuperscript{29} Although Retrospective Income Gains and Prospective Income Gains are relatively highly correlated ($r=.42$), the results are not influenced by including them both in the models. When Prospective Income Gains is omitted, Retrospective Income Gains is still not statistically significant in either model.
the most politically “plugged in” members of our sample. A number of recent studies and journalistic reports have focused on the strongly nationalist and often anti-foreign culture present in Chinese cyberspace, especially when it comes to China’s relations with Japan and the United States. In this view, aggrieved nationalists actively seek out Internet discussion as a means of venting anger and connecting with like-minded individuals. Our data support such an interpretation and indicate that any moderating effect of greater access to information online is very weak. We also have anecdotal data that use of the Internet exposes people to new sources of information, which produces anti-foreign sentiments shaped by the victimization narrative. The relationship between Uses Internet and Victims is therefore likely to be interactive: those who resent past and present examples of China’s victimization by other countries seek out the Internet to vent their views, while others have their views shaped in part by their use of the Internet. In contrast, Internet use had no significant relationship with respondents’ reported patriotism.

Our Commercial Media variable uses ad spending as a proxy for the strength of the commercial media market, which crowds out the state’s message. It was negative and significant in the Victims model, but there was virtually no relationship between the extent of media commercialization (or conversely, state control) and levels of patriotism. The media’s importance for agreement with the victimization narrative highlights the major state role in building this narrative: where more diverse media exist, respondents’ views more frequently differ from the party line. Commercialization lowers the state’s control over the message and thereby lowers support for the victim narrative. In comparison, the absence of any relationship between media control and patriotism is somewhat puzzling. As outlined above, it is possible that all types of Chinese media find playing to patriotic sentiments equally lucrative.

Finally, we examine the demographic control variables included in our model. Two of them – CCP membership and political generation – merit attention. First, and perhaps surprisingly, CCP was positively correlated with Victims but not with Patriots. This suggests that CCP members are more likely to be exposed to and accept the victimization narrative as conveyed by top leaders and the state-sponsored media, but are not necessarily more patriotic than the broader citizenry. The results for the different political generations fit our expectations for the Victims model but not for Patriots. The coefficients for the two middle cohorts – the Cultural Revolution and Early Reform generations – are negative and statistically significant, indicating that they are less likely than the older Revolutionary Generation (the omitted benchmark cohort) to agree with the victimization narrative. The youngest cohort, the Post-1992 Generation, is not significantly different from the oldest cohort. This finding accords well with the descriptions of Chinese cohorts noted above: those most skeptical of government narrative are those who grew up during the chaos of the Cultural Revolution or who lived through the tumultuous first decade of reform. In contrast, life experiences in different political generations are not significantly related to patriotism; the coefficients for all three variables are small and not statistically significant. In short, the oldest and youngest Chinese adults are more likely than the middle-aged to accept the victimization narrative, but they are not more or less likely to be patriotic. This analysis also provides further evidence that China’s youth are significantly more supportive of the official Party narrative of victimization than their older peers or parents, a development in line with concerns about growing anti-foreign nationalism among younger Chinese citizens.
Analysis

In general, the results of our Victim model indicate that individual political values such as support for traditional social structures and deference to central authority, as well as behavioral factors like Internet use and a willingness to engage the political system, play a major role in predicting whether or not citizens of the PRC agree with the government’s central narrative of international relations: that big powers can and do victimize weaker states in pursuit of their own interests. This relationship is not a straightforward one that matches political liberalism with skepticism toward the state’s victimization narrative, but rather one in which individuals appear to maintain fairly consistent beliefs about power and the use of force across various issue areas. Finally, external factors such as the strong formative experiences of those coming of age during the Cultural Revolution or early period of reform and the relative level of media openness also have important modulating effects in the expected directions.

Our second model takes more general patriotic sentiment as the dependent variable. Compared to the first model, a coherent set of political orientations, satisfaction with one’s life circumstances, and the relative level of material prosperity better predict the strength of patriotic beliefs for urban Chinese. Those political values variables important to both models, namely Traditional and Deference, have effects opposite than we found for the victim narrative as elaborated above. Of all the explanatory variables, only the expectation of future income gains (Prospective Income) has the same effect on both Victim and Patriot.

What general conclusions can we draw from these results? First, political values matter for both expressions of nationalism – belief in the victimization narrative, and patriotic affinity for the country. Intriguingly, however, they matter in different ways for each. Those with the most traditional social values and who are quickest to defer to authority are both the most
patriotic and the least likely to agree with the CCP’s victimization narrative, i.e. the most likely to believe that it is *normatively acceptable* for big powers to dominate international relations and disregard other countries’ interests. As suggested above, this likely reflects the externalization of one’s underlying political beliefs rather than an overt rejection of the dominant CCP narrative itself. Furthermore, pluralist values are negatively related to patriotism but are unrelated to perspectives on victimization in foreign policy. This outcome makes sense given the CCP’s stance that any distribution of political power will lead to dangerous social instability, a factor relevant only in the domestic context.

Equally intriguing are the variables that do not show a significant relationship with either dependent variable. For the most part, demographics do a poor job of predicting nationalism in either form. Despite common assumptions that males, self-identified Han Chinese, and the less-educated are more nationalistic, our data indicate that this is not necessarily the case: all else being equal, they are no more likely to be either *Victim* or *Patriot* than females, ethnic minorities, or highly educated individuals. In addition, age mattered only in the case of externally-oriented nationalism. Younger Chinese are somewhat more nationalist in this regard than elders who came of age during the Cultural Revolution or early reform periods, but today’s youth (the “post-1980” generation, as they are known in the PRC) do not appear to be significantly more or less patriotic than their forebears. Finally, the lack of a significant relationship between party membership and nationalism comes as a surprise to us. With nearly 80 million members today, it is possible that the party cannot help but broadly represent the spectrum of opinion amongst urban Chinese or that the instrumental aspects of party membership have come to dominate any ideological component. Still, the result is nonetheless unexpected.

31 Note once again that the survey was not implemented in Tibet or Xinjiang, so any comparison between Han Chinese and ethnic minorities accounts only for minority citizens living outside of those two areas.
Whatever the strategies of legitimation the CCP may use, the Chinese leadership class does not appear to hold significantly more nationalist views than the population at large.

What do these results indicate for our earlier theoretical questions on distinguishing different aspects of nationalism and determining their sources? First, it confirms on a national scale that nationalism can be analytically separated into multiple components, each with its own set of correlates. Empirically, the “nationalism” connoted by anti-foreign attitudes and interstate relations is not identical with the “nationalism” represented by one’s general pride in and identification with the country. Rather than simply two variations on the common theme of “nationalism,” our findings reveal them to be categorically different concepts. Second, a mainly society-driven explanation of nationalism’s sources receives strong support from the comparison between the two models and from many of the two models’ observed significant relationships. As suggested above, the victimization narrative in foreign policy is widely seen as a product of state-driven processes, while pride in one’s country may just as easily accrue from sources outside the state. If both were primarily state-driven, we would expect our dependent variables to have similar correlates and to move in similar directions. Instead, we find that the correlates which they share have precisely opposite effects (with the single exception of Prospective Income Gains), and that each model has other unique significant relationships. This finding gives strong support to the notion that the growth of nationalist sentiment is primarily a bottom-up process in the PRC rather than a simple top-down imposition of the state. Individual political values are important, but they tend to be associated with more pride in one’s country and with a view of international relations more amenable to big-power exploitation, a view directly counter to the values of “multipolarity” and “democracy in international relations” which the CCP consistently promotes and therefore at clear odds with a state-driven model. That these variables
are among the best available predictors in our two models strongly supports a societally-driven explanation. Culture and family appear to play an important role alongside whatever forces the CCP may bring to bear in its quest for popular support.

The other significant independent variables are more split, reflecting different explanations in each model. In our Victim model, the other three significant variables include one that is unambiguously outside the state (Commercial Media), an individual behavioral variable with little relationship to state policy (Uses Internet), and finally demographic age variables that indicate generational skepticism toward the CCP narrative. None of these support a top-down view of this aspect of Chinese nationalism. For our Patriot model, beliefs regarding political pluralism, life satisfaction, and the respondent’s relative level of income were also important. As noted earlier, pluralist beliefs were measured with questions explicitly drawn from the domestic context and reflect the expected relationship: those who do not see plural social forces as inherent threats to stability are at odds with the CCP and correspondingly less patriotic. The life satisfaction variable also gives an intuitive result, suggesting that those more pleased with their lives overall feel correspondingly more patriotic pride in their nation. This finding is complicated, however, by the negative relationship observed between income and patriotism, which seems to reflect a gap between wealth and happiness in China despite modern materialism. Together, these three variables offer mixed evidence in the state-driven versus bottom-up debate over Chinese nationalism. To the degree that the state can improve its citizens’ satisfaction with their lives, it may generate increased patriotic support. However, some citizens maintain political beliefs that conflict with CCP preferences in spite of state propaganda, and they express correspondingly weaker patriotic sentiments. Finally, those who are wealthiest in
their communities express lower levels of patriotism, a curious finding that is unlikely to be the result of direct state action.

Overall, then, these new survey data emphasize the categorical difference between patriotism and externally oriented nationalism. Each has different sources, and certain factors important to both have opposite effects. In short, patriots do not necessarily see themselves as victims, a finding which may seem obvious to some observers but which challenges a well-developed literature on Chinese nationalism.32

Our analysis offers at least some support to both the state-sponsored and popular explanations of Chinese nationalism, but the popular-based concept of nationalism receives significantly more support overall. CCP influence appears to be more narrowly focused, flowing either from the material success of China’s reform and development or from views on those issues which the central government spends the most time attempting to “guide” in the court of public opinion, and this influence is only reflected in the patriotic aspect of nationalist sentiment. However, in the case of the victimization narrative so favored by the CCP, the factors which contribute to national pride actually inhibit citizens’ agreement with the narrative. The CCP may therefore face the makings of a contradiction in its relations with society as some of the factors supporting popular pride in China’s achievements run counter to agreement with the state’s preferred interpretation of Chinese foreign relations.

32 Gries, et al, 2011, reach a similar conclusion: they caution American analysts against assuming that patriotic displays by Chinese (such as flag waving) reflect nationalistic beliefs. Even though patriotism and anti-foreign sentiments (what they refer to as nationalism) are closely related among Americans, they are separate and distinct among Chinese.
Conclusion

The key observation from this study is that different dimensions of nationalism must be unpacked in order to be understood. General foreign policy viewpoints informed by the victimization narrative and patriotic sentiments are not only conceptually distinct but also empirically distinct. This finding reflects the theoretical work of nationalism scholars like Michael Hechter, distinguishing “patriotism” or “state-building nationalism” from externally-oriented types of the concept. It also lends support to a similar finding in the China field which focused solely on college students, indicating that the empirical distinction between these two aspects of nationalism can be generalized to the urban population as a whole.33

Chinese nationalism is not just a concern for foreign governments on the receiving end of vitriol from official and societal voices. It is also a concern for China’s leaders. The Chinese public may already be primed to view actions of other countries as hostile to Chinese interests. Although we have identified the factors that are negatively correlated with the victim narrative, we should not lose sight of a basic fact: many more agree with the victim narrative than disagree. They do not need much prodding to interpret such actions as recent examples of a long pattern of behavior.

If nationalism is popular-based, it will continue to constrain China’s leaders and confound foreign observers. Most pundits are content to blame the Chinese state for rising nationalism, but they have often ignored the possibility that nationalism is independent of the state. The state may try to control and channel popular nationalism to serve its purposes, but that does not mean it is able to create it, much less turn it on and off at will. The counter-factual of this line of thinking is that in the absence of state mobilization, Chinese society would be less

33 Gries, et al, 2011
nationalistic, less critical of foreign governments, and more accommodating to international norms. The data here do not give much support to this perspective.

Our findings also indicate areas of future research. First, to see if our findings are generalizable, more empirical studies of nationalism in other countries are needed. If our findings are replicated elsewhere, then the distinction between anti-foreign sentiments and patriotism will need to be re-thought. In that case, scholars would do well to avoid treating them as simply variations on a common theme of nationalism and begin investigating them as distinctly different concepts.

A second area of future research concerns Chinese public opinion on China’s foreign policy behavior. Extensive research exists on Chinese views of other countries and China’s place in the world (especially in the economic realm), but there has been less work on the Chinese public’s assessment of China’s foreign policy strategy. At present, most Chinese tend not to see China as a major power, but as an emerging nation. Will they continue to be critical of behavior associated with major powers when they come to believe that China has become a major power? Will they continue to view such behavior through a victimization narrative, or will they accept it as necessary to assert and defend China’s national interests?

Finally, a more distant area of research concerns the implications of potential democratization for Chinese nationalism. According to Mansfield and Snyder, leaders of democratizing regimes attempt to stoke nationalistic sentiments in order to shore up popular support for themselves. In this scenario, it is not the benign form of patriotism that is activated, but the more malign form that leads to international conflict. This is an issue of even greater interest to policy makers than scholars, since policy makers do not have the luxury of extensive research and reflection before deciding how to respond. For those who are wary of the potential
impact of a rising China on international security, the combination of a rising, democratizing, and nationalistic China may multiply those concerns. That is why it is so important to gain a more nuanced understanding of how public opinion shapes influences foreign policy, in both established and new regimes.
APPENDIX 1

The data presented in this paper come from a survey implemented in China during fall and early winter of 2010. The survey was a nationwide probability sample of urban areas, drawn from the provincial level municipalities (Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Chongqing) and prefecture level cities. This pool of over 280 cities was stratified using per capita GDP. A sample of 50 cities was selected using the probability proportionate to size (PPS) method, meaning that cities with large populations had a higher probability of being selected than smaller cities. Equivalent numbers of cities were selected from each of three strata (high, medium, and low levels of per capita GDP). Within each city, a district was selected as the primary sampling unit using the PPS method, based on the number of housing units in each district. Each PSU was divided into 30” x 30” squares using GPS technology, and from this grid three squares were selected as secondary sampling units using the PPS method, with the number of households as the measure of size. Within each secondary sampling unit three sub-squares (roughly 90 meters square) were selected as tertiary sampling units with a simplified random sampling method. Among all the occupied residential units within the selected sub-squares, 60 equidistant residential units were selected. Finally, on the basis of a Kish grid, individuals within each selected residential unit who had lived there for at least six months and were between the ages of 18-80 were chosen as respondents, who were interviewed face to face.

The actual implementation of the survey was conducted by the Research Center for Contemporary China of Peking University, under the supervision of Shen Mingming, Yang Ming, Yan Jie, and Chai Jingjing. All the interviewers for this project were currently enrolled college students in the targeted provinces and cities. RCCC supervisors trained the interviewers

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34 For more details on using GPS technology in sampling, see Landry and Shen (2005).
and monitored their work daily. The survey included a total of 3,874 respondents, and was conducted between September and December 2010.
### APPENDIX 2: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF VARIABLES

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