Love of Variety? Heterogeneous Responses to Foreign Goods in the Marketplace

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of exposure to foreign goods in the marketplace on the policy preferences and political behavior of US consumers. Using a survey experiment, we simulate a realistic consumption experience with well-known brands of sports utility vehicles. Our findings reveal that exposure to foreign brands intensifies hostility towards immigrants and trade among respondents holding pre-existing nationalist attitudes while also increasing their support for Trump as a presidential candidate. Exposure to foreign brands has the opposite effect on the preferences and behavior of cosmopolitans. Our results demonstrate that consumption in an increasingly diversified marketplace can drive a bottom-up process of trade policy polarization. Our study has significant implications for understanding the contemporary political backlash against economic globalization and standard models of international trade based on the "love of variety."

Key words: globalization, economic nationalism, love of variety

Who supports international trade? After more than two decades of research, there is an emerging consensus that individual attitudes toward trade are highly malleable, subject to framing and priming effects, and driven more by cultural attachment, nationalism, and ethnocentrism than by material self-interest (Scheve and Slaughter, 2000; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2001; Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2006; Mansfield and Mutz, 2009; Margalit, 2012; Naoi and Kume, 2015; Mutz and Kim, 2017; Ballard-Rosa, Goldstein, and Rudra, 2023). Given the extensive integration of global markets through both final and intermediate goods trade, understanding how these goods influence political preferences is crucial. Unfortunately, we still do not fully understand how consumption-related evaluations of foreign products relate to political preferences, nor whether international trade is universally perceived as beneficial by consumers exposed to trade.

Unpacking individuals' opinions on trade policies is complex, as these opinions can be formed in various ways. Prior research has predominantly examined the influence of elite rhetoric in shaping individuals' perspectives, implying that individuals act like "sponges," absorbing the messaging from elites. However, individuals also form opinions through their own consumption experiences, interpreting both their material circumstances and the non-material consequences of their daily lives. To contribute to this debate, we investigate the impact of exposure to a diversified market, particularly exposure to foreign goods, on policy preferences and political behavior on consumers.

We argue that exposure to foreign goods yields heterogeneous effects: it may either diminish or leave unchanged the levels of economic nationalism among pre-treatment cosmopolitans, but it will notably heighten economic nationalism among pre-treatment nationalists. To evaluate these hypotheses, we conduct a novel survey experiment, randomly exposing respondents to different market conditions. This approach simulates realistic consumption experiences with well-known brands, facilitating the development of distinct consumer profiles. Our focus is to assess whether the influence of a product's country of origin on policy preferences and behavior depends on pre-treatment levels of nationalism and to uncover the mechanisms behind this relationship.

Participants in our experiment were asked to evaluate and consider purchasing foreign sports utility vehicles (SUVs), with the brands manipulated to be domestic, European, or Asian. Our experimental design introduces several novel aspects. Firstly, we simulate a realistic shopping experience with well-known brands, mirroring the growing trend of Americans buying automobiles entirely online. This approach trades some degree of experimental control and internal validity for greater realism and external validity. Secondly, we extend the analysis beyond individual home bias (for example, Bankert, Powers, and Sheagley, 2022; Feng, Kerner, and Sumner, 2021), investigating whether exposure to foreign products reinforces nationalists' preference for illiberal trade policies and restricted cross-border movement. Lastly, our study is pioneering in exploring how consumption in an increasingly diverse marketplace might catalyze a grassroots-driven polarization of trade policy, a departure from the predominant focus on elite framing's influence on mass attitudes (e.g., Mutz, 2021; Ballard-Rosa, Goldstein, and Rudra, 2023).

Our analysis yields significant insights: Nationalists exposed to foreign goods demonstrate increased support for illiberal policies, such as reducing immigration and expressing negative evaluations of trade, and are more likely to endorse populist right-wing leaders like Trump. Conversely, cosmopolitans exhibit minimal change, with a slight trend towards greater liberalism, including pro-trade and pro-immigration stances. These findings challenge the 'love of variety' assumption inherent in trade theory, suggesting that diversification may provoke adverse reactions towards trade among nationalists. Such insights are crucial in the context of growing concerns about the future of the liberal international order amidst rising nationalism and right-wing populism. Our work extends Autor et al.'s discussion of 'importing political polarization' from a focus solely on producers to include the impact of trade-related consumption experiences on political polarization. Even minimal interventions, like our experiment, highlight a process of polarization driven from the bottom up, indicating that everyday exposure to foreign goods can foster divergent policy preferences among citizens. Furthermore, our study provides empirical evidence on the impact of nationalism on populism and illiberalism, bridging

a significant gap in the literature that previously lacked systematic empirical research in this domain (Mansfield and Pevehouse, 2022).

In addition to assessing the overall impact of consumption-based exposure to trade, we investigate the underlying reasons, uncovering that responses to European goods—frequently perceived as luxurious and thereby distant for many ordinary people—account for a substantial part of the foreign effects. This finding is particularly intriguing given that, based on the notion of status threat, one might anticipate a more pronounced reaction to Asian cars. Further, through model-based mediation analysis, we demonstrate that exposure to foreign goods fosters xenophobic and egocentric beliefs, which, in turn, lead to illiberal policy preferences and electoral support for candidates like Trump.

In the remainder of the article, we first situate our discussion within the literature on economic globalization and the populist backlash, from which we derive our hypotheses. Next, we describe our experimental design and the results obtained. To elucidate these findings, we also investigate the underlying reasons for our results. Before concluding, we conduct a mediation analysis to examine the pathways through which exposure to foreign goods triggers illiberalism.

Economic Globalization and the Populist Backlash

If free trade maximizes national welfare, why do governments impose tariffs? This puzzle has motivated political-economic research for decades. The standard answer is that trade generates both winners and losers, and while the aggregate gains may be larger than the losses, if the losers have political power, they will use it to impose tariffs. Recently, some scholars in this research tradition have turned their attention to understanding the emergence and political success of right-wing populist parties and candidates around the world (Colantone and Stanig, 2018; Ballard-Rosa, Scheve, and Jensen, 2021). This is because opposition to free trade and economic nationalism, more generally, is a central tenet of right-wing populism. Trade losers may be drawn to the foreign economic policy positions of right-wing populist candidates and parties. This phenomenon is viewed by

many in international relations as a significant challenge to the post-World War II liberal international economic order (Lake, Martin, and Risse, 2021).

Do trade losers tend to favor right-wing populist parties and candidates? Evidence indicates that regions experiencing significant import shocks show increased aggregate support for these parties and candidates, yet the evidence at the individual level is less compelling (Colantone and Stanig, 2019). An alternative hypothesis, which has garnered significant attention, suggests that people's political responses to trade shocks are more sociotropic—concerned with society at large—rather than egocentric, focusing on personal impact (Mansfield and Mutz, 2009). Nonetheless, support for this sociotropic explanation remains limited. For example, Hays, Lim, and Spoon (2019) find that individuals living in regions that experience large import shocks are more optimistic about the overall state of the economy than others.

The comprehensive body of literature in both political science and economics has traditionally highlighted the negative effects of imports on domestic economic production, especially employment, while taking the consumption benefits of trade—such as lower prices and a broader range of products—for granted. These advantages are extensively discussed in seminal works by Krugman (1979) and Krugman (1980), which introduce equilibrium models based on monopolistic competition. These models underscore the importance of product variety in international trade. Krugman argues that countries benefit from trade by importing new varieties of goods, attributing this advantage to the consumers' "love of variety" and the economic practical constraints that prevent countries from producing every variety due to fixed production costs. This perspective is reinforced by Broda and Weinstein (2004), who empirically show how the increase in global product varieties has significantly enhanced welfare, with these benefits primarily attributed to the introduction of new imported varieties.

Meanwhile, a small group of political scientists argues that an individual's self-identification as either a producer or consumer shapes their views on trade, especially towards imports. Baker (2005) shows that individuals who heavily consume imported goods tend to be more supportive of trade. In a survey experiment conducted in Japan, Naoi and Kume

(2011) present evidence of "producer projection": respondents exposed to a visual cue emphasizing production are likelier to support restrictions on agricultural imports, irrespective of their own industry of employment. This tendency is more pronounced among those experiencing job insecurity. Similarly, Naoi and Kume (2015) demonstrate that priming individuals with consumer-related cues enhances their support for free trade in general.

This raises the question: Is the common belief that voters qua consumers view trade and globalization positively accurate? In other words, do all consumers inherently support trade? Furthermore, how do non-material factors like nationalism influence these attitudes beyond the simple benefits of price and variety that imports offer? Our research diverges from traditional approaches by analyzing the interplay between exposure to foreign goods, anti-trade sentiment, and the endorsement of right-wing populist politics, challenging the conventional wisdom that consumer-oriented evaluations of trade invariably foster a positive outlook towards it. By incorporating insights from international business and marketing on consumer ethnocentrism, our study explores a psychological tendency that leads consumers to overlook the benefits of imports, introducing a nuanced viewpoint that has been largely absent in political science discussions.[1]

The Argument: Trade and Nationalism

Carnegie and Gaikwad (2022) explore the aversion to trading with perceived geopolitical adversaries, and various studies have underscored the effects of animosity towards other countries. Scholars such as Guisinger (2017), Margalit (2012), O'Rourke and Sinnott (2001), and Mansfield, Mutz, and Brackbill (2019) have thoroughly examined these attitudes. Together, these studies illuminate the intricacies of international trade perspectives, revealing how national allegiance and perceptions of foreign nations significantly shape these views.

The influence of nationalism and its interaction with globalization has predominantly been analyzed through the lens of comparative advantages that benefit nationals over

[1]A notable exception is Bankert, Powers, and Sheagley (2022).

foreigners, with a focus on production aspects. Mutz and Kim (2017) characterizes this dynamic as in-group favoritism, where individuals show a preference for enhancing the benefits for their own group at the expense of external groups. A key perspective underlying this research is the significance of the geographic origin of production in conferring advantages to compatriots, particularly through job creation, resulting in a predilection for domestically produced goods. Moreover, Feng, Kerner, and Sumner (2021) demonstrate a general preference for domestic investments over foreign ones, especially those originating from China, a stance that is markedly strong among nationalists. This body of research highlights how nationalist sentiments can lead to protectionist attitudes regarding trade, from the perspective of production (related to job creation) and investments.

While the political science literature has largely overlooked the consumer perspective on trade and nationalism, research in international business and marketing has shown that consumer ethnocentrism significantly influences the willingness to purchase imports (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos, 2015; Herche, 1994) and is broadly linked to nationalism and patriotism (Balabanis et al., 2001; Lekakis, 2017). Increasingly, evidence suggests that consumer ethnocentrism may have a neurological foundation (Huang et al., 2020). For example, Casado-Aranda et al. (2021) find that individuals with high levels of consumer ethnocentrism exhibit activation in brain regions related to self-interest and reward when contemplating buying domestic products, whereas areas linked to risk-taking light up when considering foreign purchases. The political implications and outcomes of exposure to foreign goods remain underexplored, representing a significant aspect of our research contribution.

Economic theory posits that trade's consumption benefits, such as lower prices and increased product variety, are unequivocally positive. Empirical studies also show that individuals evaluating trade from a consumer standpoint tend to be more supportive (Baker, 2005; Naoi and Kume, 2015). We argue that this increasing support, may not hold among nationalists. The "love of variety" viewpoint overlooks the psychological and socio-political factors shaping consumer behavior. Nationalist ideologies, emphasizing the nation-state's interests and identity, can profoundly influence perceptions of international

trade, suggesting a more intricate link between consumer preferences and trade attitudes than previously acknowledged.

Thus, when nationalists are exposed to foreign goods in the marketplace, their reactions might not align with what we would expect based on "love for variety" trade models. The presence of foreign products could trigger protectionist and illiberal responses, driven by perceived threats to national and other in-group identities (e.g., good people vs. corrupt elites). Simply put, nationalists may not derive utility from consuming a internationally diverse basket of goods.

Conversely, when considering cosmopolitans, we expect that exposure to foreign goods will be perceived as an opportunity to enhance consumer choice, access superior products, or benefit from competitive pricing. Therefore, when cosmopolitans encounter foreign-brand SUVs, this exposure is likely to reinforce their belief in the advantages of trade and support for liberal policies. Accordingly, our experimental treatments, which introduce respondents to foreign-brand SUVs, are expected to emphasize the benefits of price and variety inherent in trade for cosmopolitans, while provoking economic nationalism among nationalists. Our theoretical framework is summarized in Figure 1.

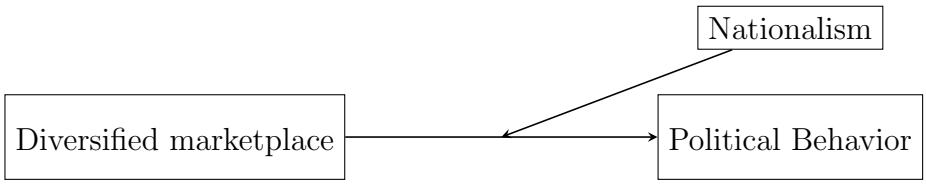

Figure 1: Nationalism heterogeneous effects theory diagram

Hypothesis 1 (Nationalist) *Nationalists who are exposed to foreign goods will be more likely to support illiberal policies and right-wing populism compared to those who encounter domestic products.*

Hypothesis 2 (Cosmopolitan) *Cosmopolitans who are exposed to foreign goods will be less (or equally) likely to support illiberal policies and right-wing populism compared to those who encounter domestic products.*

Why Do Nationalists Support Illiberalism?

While we argue that consumption exposure to foreign goods will foster illiberal policy preferences and bolster support for right-wing populism among nationalists, we are also interested in unpacking how exposure to foreign goods influences political behavior. We posit that the causal effects of exposure to foreign brands on economic nationalism unfold both directly and indirectly, via changes in individual attitudes.

This section delves into mechanisms that have been the subject of mixed results in previous observational studies. The political science literature offers two principal frameworks to explain support for right-wing populism: cultural issues and economic grievances, with the latter, further divided into personal and community-level effects. While the role of immigration as a catalyst has been thoroughly investigated in cultural studies (e.g., Knigge, 1998; Golder, 2003), the impact of trade—a crucial avenue for encountering foreign products and cultures—has received less attention, with notable exceptions like Hays, Lim, and Spoon (2019), who highlight hostility towards foreigners as a potential mechanism.

Another set of scholars focusing on labor market effects has overlooked the importance of personal perceptions regarding economic conditions, preferring quantifiable economic indicators. Earlier research indicated that trade preferences were driven by economic self-interest (Mayda and Rodrik, 2005; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2001; Scheve and Slaughter, 2000). Recent studies, however, have challenged this link, suggesting that trade attitudes are more influenced by symbolic and social factors than by material self-interest (Sabet, 2013; Mansfield and Mutz, 2009; Margalit, 2012). Thus, the evidence suggesting that individuals adversely impacted by globalization, such as low-skilled workers or those in import-competing sectors, are more likely to harbor anti-globalization or populist views is weak (Hays, Lim, and Spoon, 2019; Schaffer and Spilker, 2019).

More recently, scholars have shown stronger evidence at the community level indicating that people in regions with high import levels tend to support anti-globalization and populist ideologies, irrespective of their personal economic situation, supporting the

community-based perspective that regional empathy for those economically disadvantaged by imports encourages support for the far right (Colantone and Stanig, 2018). In this work, we aim to examine the presence of both egocentric and sociotropic influences. Additionally, leveraging research on consumption ethnocentrism (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos, 2015; Herche, 1994; Huang et al., 2020; Casado-Aranda et al., 2021), we intend to explore consumer ethnocentrism as a link between exposure to foreign goods and changes in illiberal policy preferences.

Our theoretical framework, depicted in Figure 2, illustrates a mediated path from exposure to foreign goods to right-wing populism and illiberal policies. Xenophobic attitudes, signifying cultural concerns, are considered a key mediator for explaining illiberalism. We will explore an egocentric pathway, based on the notion that an individual's economic condition critically influences their political stance, assessed through questions about trade's perceived benefits for the individual and their family. Moreover, we will examine a sociotropic pathway, reflecting the idea that community empathy for those economically hurt by trade affects political attitudes, gauged by views on trade's impact on the American economy. Lastly, we will assess ethnocentrism's role in this context, through questions regarding the preference for American-made products and the belief in prioritizing domestic over foreign goods.

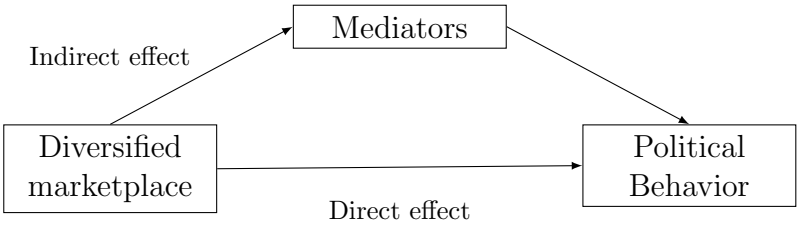

Figure 2: Egocentric, Sociotropic, Xenophobia, Ethnocentrism concerns theory diagram

In the following section, we systematically assess the impact of exposure to foreign goods through an experiment designed to explore the relationship between such exposure and political behavior. Throughout this experiment, we disentangle the heterogeneous effects of exposure to these goods across individuals with varying degrees of pre-treatment

nationalism. In supplemental analyses, we further investigate the mechanisms underlying these changes in political behavior.

Testing Heterogeneous Responses to Foreign Goods: Measures and Methods

This section proposes a test for our theory using experimental data. Our argument of heterogeneous effects suggests that exposure to foreign goods will trigger changes in political behavior, rising xenophobia, and support for populist right leaders among those with high levels of nationalism. Survey experiments help us understand these relationships, as they avoid the problem of endogeneity and spurious correlation by randomly exposing individuals to either foreign or domestic goods. This way, we can see how countries of origin of products affect people's views on politics.

So far, only a few studies have explored the effects of trade-related consumption experiences on political attitudes and behavior (Naoi and Kume, 2015, 2011; Bankert, Powers, and Sheagley, 2022). Most focus on trade and its consequences for economic production (e.g., Mutz and Kim, 2017). While these studies are groundbreaking, they face several criticisms. First, with the exception of Bankert, Powers, and Sheagley (2022), the studies overlook the importance of variety (goods and prices), and particularly the exposure to foreign goods, as a factor to explain political preferences. This underscores the potential consequences of exposure to trade, which go beyond mere production and jobs to include consumption experiences.

Secondly, popular experimental designs expose subjects to fictional scenarios rather than realistic, ecologically valid experiences. This raises questions about whether these experimental results tell us anything about real-world situations. The informational cues, visual primes, and conjoint consumption experiences might not reflect how individuals actually experience trade in the real world. For example, respondents' reactions could be influenced simply by reading the country of origin on a product, predisposing them to respond in a certain way. Consequently, these studies may not effectively determine if realistic consumption experiences significantly influence political attitudes. Finally,

while previous research demonstrate that exposure to trade influences support for trade policies, the mechanisms driving this response have not received much attention.

Our study expands upon prior experiments in several key areas. First, our surveys specifically focus on the consumption experiences of foreign goods, with a particular emphasis on individuals who exhibit higher levels of nationalism. Second, in our scenarios, we offer an ecologically valid consumption experience. This is achieved through a framework that simulates the experience of online shopping involving well-recognized goods (such as cars) and established brands without explicitly mentioning their countries of origin. Lastly, we incorporate a series of questions designed to identify potential mechanisms that might link exposure to foreign goods with illiberal policy preferences. These mechanisms include egocentric, sociotropic, xenophobic, and ethnocentric attitudes, enabling us to evaluate their mediating role rigorously.

Experimental Design and Procedures

We conducted our survey in the United States using CloudResearch and their Mturk Toolkit service. The survey involved 3,299 US adults and was carried out in October-November 2022.[2] Participants in our study were informed that our focus was on understanding how personal politics and public policy preferences correlate with the characteristics of 'big ticket' items consumers purchase and their inclination towards online buying. We created a simulated shopping experience for cars, directing respondents to visit websites of specific automobile models.[3] They were asked to review and consider the purchase of three different SUVs. The purpose of the survey is explained to potential respondents as follows:

[2]We chose this platform because previous research has shown that CloudResearch or Prolific yields better results than just using Mturk, undergraduate students, or Qualtrics (Douglas, Ewell, and Brauer, 2023; Hauser et al., 2022; Litman et al., 2021). Additionally, this platform incorporates quality control measures, permitting only selected respondents with an approval rate above 95% to participate and preventing multiple accesses from the same IP address. Respondents are paid $1.50 for a completed survey.

[3]Respondents are provided with a link to each model's (external) webpage where pictures and product descriptions are available. We record whether respondents click on the link and the amount of time before proceeding to the next vehicle. Figure A.1 presents a screenshot of the websites at the moment the experiment was conducted. As evidenced by these figures, the websites for all SUVs display strong similarities.

> Companies are increasingly interested in learning about the political identities and public policy preferences of their customers. A recent survey, for example, showed that an overwhelming majority of consumers believe that brands should take a stand on important social and political issues of the day. Political attitudes and behavior also seem to correlate with the product attributes that consumers find desirable. We hope to learn more about these relationships. In this survey, the focus is on automobiles, specifically sports utility vehicles (SUVs).
>
> As part of this study, we will ask you some questions about your political identity, public policy preferences, and product evaluations. You will be guided to the webpages of randomly selected SUV (sports utility vehicles) models to aid in these evaluations. We will also ask you whether you would consider buying an automobile online.

Under this premise, participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions. The first condition featured three American sports utility vehicle (SUV) brands: Ford Explorer, Chevy Traverse LS, and GMC Acadia SLE. The second condition showcased three European SUV brands: Mercedes GLA 250, Volkswagen Atlas SE, and Volvo XC40. The third condition included three Asian SUV brands: Hyundai Palisade SE, Toyota Highlander L, and Mazda CX-9. For simplicity, we refer to the first condition (American brands) as our control condition, and the second and third conditions as our European and Asian treatment conditions, respectively. As with most conjoint consumer-choice experiments, a pure control, in which respondents are not asked to compare any SUVs, is theoretically uninteresting and nonsensical, given our survey description.

We selected automobiles due to the sector's significance in domestic production and consumption, as well as the high volume of imports.[4] In choosing brands, we considered consumer familiarity (based on sales data) and product similarity in terms of price (approximately $34-38k) and quality. Our aim was to provide an ecologically valid con-

[4]Automobiles are the most imported commodity (e.g., in 2018 represented 8.3% of total imports into the U.S), and they play an important role in domestic production, with the car industry and their suppliers representing over 3% of the U.S's GDP.

sumption experience. Therefore, we did not include information about the products' country of origin. Respondents were unaware that they were participating in an experiment until they were debriefed at the end of the survey. This incomplete disclosure of information about the study's purpose is used to prevent biasing the results.

Participants in any of these experimental conditions were asked to provide sociodemographic information, which includes *inter alia* age, gender, occupation, employment status, range of income (10-point scale), and zip codes. We also measured their partisan and ideological predispositions and their levels of nationalism. To gauge nationalism, we create an index using five Likert-scale questions previously utilized in social psychology studies.[5] These questions include statements about the importance of being born in the US, pride in their country, and preference for US citizenship over any other country, among others.[6] Then, we categorize respondents' scores into low, medium, or high levels of nationalism, referring to those with low or middle levels as cosmopolitan (lower 66th percentile).

Finally, following the treatment, we prompted respondents to undertake tasks consistent with our framework on product attributes consumers find desirable. This included questions on their preference among three SUVs, reasons for potentially not purchasing these vehicles, and the rationale behind their preferred choice, with options such as fuel efficiency, safety, price, among others. Subsequent to these inquiries, we shifted focus to questions on public policy preferences. This transition was justified under the premise that companies are increasingly keen to understand their customers' political identities and public policy preferences. Consequently, we incorporated a series of questions concerning voting intentions and policy preferences.

Our primary aim is to determine whether our foreign product treatment conditions elicit heterogeneous effects on policy preferences among nationalists and cosmopolitans. These preferences include attitudes towards immigration, trade, climate change, and economic ethnocentrism. In particular, we examine the influence on support for a potential Trump candidacy in the 2024 presidential election and the core elements of neo-

[5]Several questions are similar to those in the ISSP National Identity Survey.
[6]For the complete set of questions, please refer to the attached survey materials.

mercantilist foreign economic policies that right-wing populist governments around the world, including the Trump administration from 2016 to 2020, have pursued. To assess immigration preferences, we ask subjects on a 5-point Likert scale whether the government should increase or decrease the number of immigrants allowed in the US. We measure trade favorability on a 100-point scale, we rely on evaluations of whether trade has benefited various groups such as the American economy, workers, companies, 'you and your family,' or consumers. We are also interested in whether our treatments have a causal effect on foreign policy nationalism more generally (i.e., beyond foreign economic policies). To that end, we ask whether respondents support increased military spending and oppose international cooperation to address climate change. For the latter one, we inquire about support for US participation in the Paris Agreement. We measure economic ethnocentrism through questions about preferences for buying American-made and branded products, and whether American companies should always manufacture their products in the US (consumption and producer ethnocentrism respectively Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Aljukhadar, Boeuf, and Senecal, 2021)

The survey also incorporated attention checks and manipulation checks to ensure high-quality data. These checks involved selecting a specific option during the survey and identifying the products that were the focus of the study. Additionally, we included three extra questions to assess the effectiveness of our manipulation. At the end of the survey, we asked respondents to identify whether the brands were foreign or domestic, their degree of familiarity with these brands, and which set of words best describes the vehicle brands (luxurious, powerful, safe, reliable, other). We also ask a couple of "distraction" questions on taxation and healthcare to disguise that our interest is in foreign policy.

Evidence About the Effects of Foreign Goods on Politics

Figure 3 summarizes the overall effect of exposure to foreign goods on political attitudes and behavior. To compute the average treatment effect, we compare subjects assigned to foreign SUVs (either European or Asian) with those exposed to domestic cars.[7] The

[7]We defined our treatment group as those who completed the task (i.e., clicked on at least one of the websites). The results remain similar when this constraint is relaxed.

results are largely consistent with our theory. Specifically, subjects with high levels of nationalism (represented by red circles) who were exposed to foreign automobiles are more likely to oppose immigration and trade and to support Trump, as predicted in hypothesis 1. To contextualize these results, attitudes against immigration increased by approximately 10 percentage points (pp), against trade by 8 pp, and support for Trump by 6.4 pp. This increase corresponds to 22%, 17%, and 15% of the standard deviation of the respective variables.

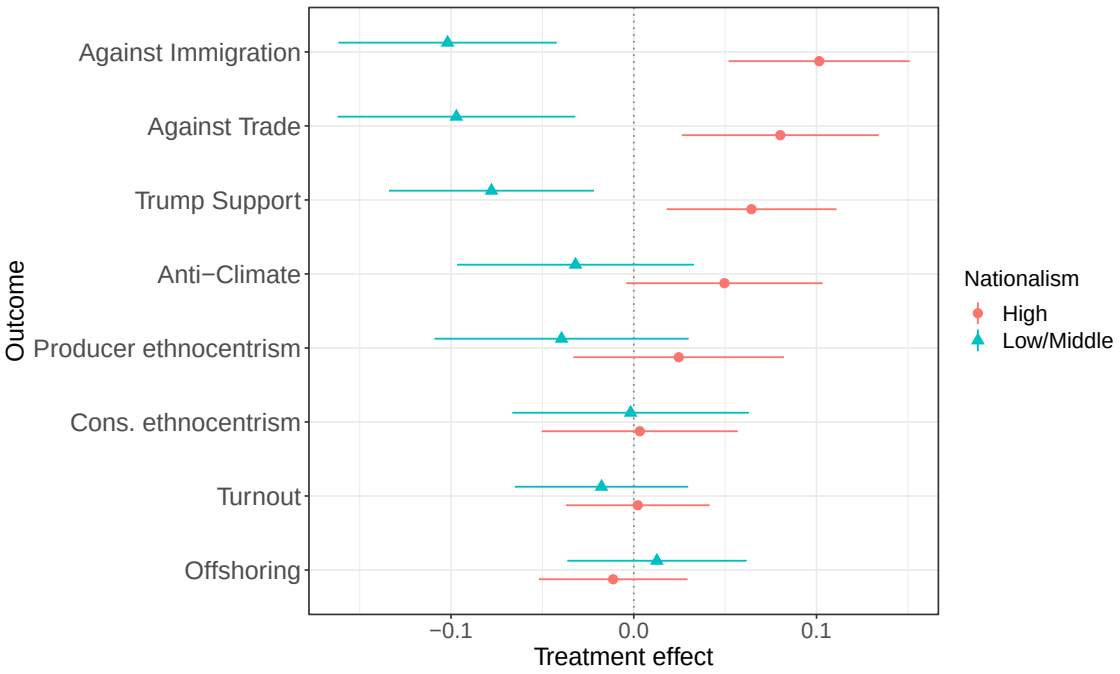

Figure 3: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism levels.
Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the full sample, meaning that the European and Asian treatments have been pooled together (N=2786). The full model can be seen in Table C.2, and estimations with control variables are included in Table C.3. Moreover, the full sample of treated without dropping the subject who did not click can be seen in Table C.5, and Figure C.2.

When we focus on cosmopolitans—those with low or middle levels of nationalism, as indicated by blue triangles in the figure—we observe that in line with hypothesis 2, exposure to foreign goods significantly negatively impacts their attitudes towards the restriction of immigration or trade, and support for Trump. Cosmopolitans tend to appreciate the price benefits and variety that international trade offers, viewing it more as an advantage rather than a cultural or economic threat, which is likely the perception that predominates among nationalists when exposed to foreign goods. In essence, our findings –aligned with our pre-registered expectations- suggest that exposure to foreign goods

markedly influences consumers: it triggers economic nationalism and support for illiberal policies among nationalists, whereas it leads to more favorable views of globalization among cosmopolitans.

Contrary to our initial expectations, which were influenced by Bankert, Powers, and Sheagley's findings, we observed no significant effects on economic ethnocentrism, either from a producer's or consumer's standpoint. Our methodological choice to deliberately omit mentions of the countries of origin may have lacked the sensitivity needed to detect this relationship, or it is possible that such a relationship simply does not exist. Additionally, we found no bias in automobile recommendations, which underscores a critical aspect of our study: significant effects on political attitudes can occur without overt biases in product endorsements. Although there was no marked preference for recommending foreign cars less than U.S. cars, we still observed a latent trigger for illiberal policy preferences among nationalists. Furthermore, we could not reject the null hypothesis concerning offshoring or opposition to international climate change agreements.

Our results remain robust when incorporating demographic controls for age, gender, income, and education levels (see Table C.3). Moreover, we control for race and economic insecurity indicators, including concerns about job (or business) loss and the routine task intensity index—a proxy for exposure to automation-related occupational risks. These controls confirm that our findings extend beyond racial identity or economic risk factors. As shown in Appendix Table C.4, even after directly accounting for white identity and economic risks, we continue to find significant evidence that exposure to foreign goods influences nationalist preferences for restricting trade and immigration, and fosters liberal attitudes among cosmopolitans.

Furthermore, when replacing the interaction terms for low and middle levels with individual interactions for each level, the results are substantively unchanged (see Table C.6). We prefer the main model (a single interaction for low and middle) since it allows for different constants for low and middle levels but pools the interactive effects. This model specification has a better predictive performance, as indicated by its lower AIC. Finally, using a broader definition of 'treated'—including those subjects who were assigned to

the treatment but did not click on the website—we find similar results (Table C.5 and Figure C.2).

Analyzing the Mechanisms: Why Do Foreign Goods Trigger Illiberalism?

Having demonstrated that exposing nationalist (cosmopolitan) subjects to foreign goods increases (decreases) support for illiberal policies, such as less (more) support for international trade, we turn to examine the influence of the SUVs' region of origin to discern which elicits stronger reactions. To this end, we stratify the sample into European and Asian brands. Following this, we undertake mediation analyses to test the mechanisms behind these outcomes. This analysis aims to determine whether xenophobic, ethnocentric, egocentric, or sociotropic pathways (mediators) might explain changes in policy preferences and support for Trump following exposure to foreign goods.

Status Threat or Anti-elitism

One potential explanation for the increased support for illiberal policies and right-wing populist candidates among nationalists exposed to foreign products could be concerns about the impact of imports on American jobs or the economy. Another explanation might be a 'status threat,' driven by a fear of foreigners (Mutz, 2018). If these illiberal responses are primarily motivated by cultural threats, we would expect a stronger average response to the Asian treatment than to the European one. This expectation aligns with prior research that indicates public hesitance towards Asian investments (Feng, Kerner, and Sumner, 2021) and goods (Bankert, Powers, and Sheagley, 2022; Sabet, 2013). Conversely, if changes in policy preferences stem primarily from egocentric or sociotropic concerns about American jobs, then no significant variation should be observed between the effects of European-foreign and Asian-foreign treatments. In essence, if the primary concerns of respondents are the material instead of cultural implications for U.S. citizens, then the country of origin would not significantly influence their perceptions; any foreign country would be perceived as a threat.

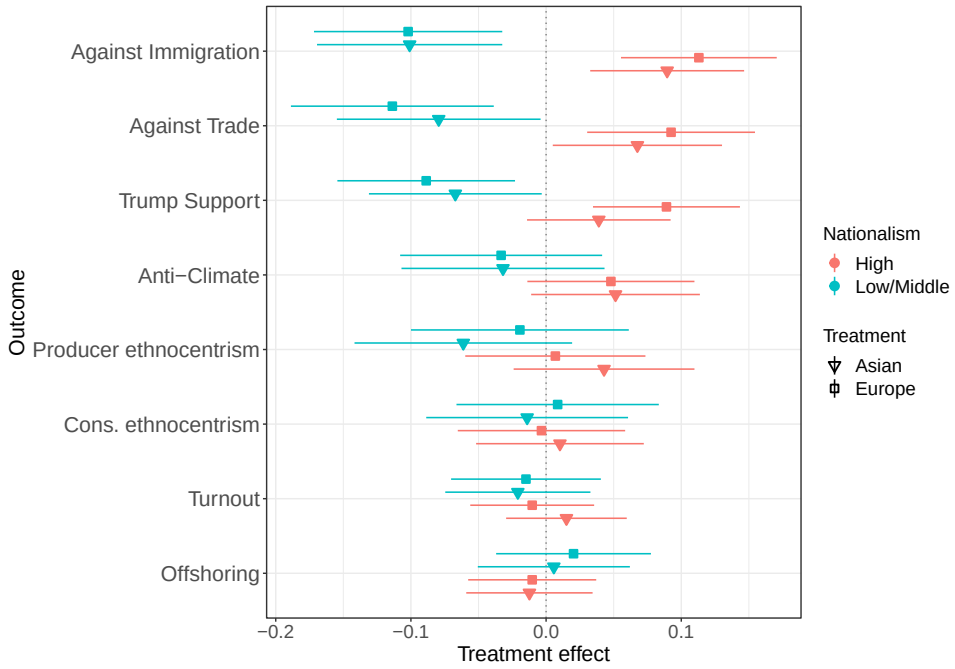

Figure 4: Treatment effect of exposure to European and Asian SUVs by nationalism levels

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle/low (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the samples by country, meaning that the European (N=1860) and Asian (N=1858) treatments are separated. The full model can be seen in Table C.7 for Europe and Table C.11 for Asian, and estimations with control variables are included in Table C.8 and Table C.12. Moreover, the full sample of treated without dropping the subject who did not click can be seen in Table C.9 and Table C.13.

As demonstrated in Figure 4, the average treatment effects for each treatment mirror those pooled together, except for the results regarding support for Trump among nationalists exposed to the Asian treatment, which are positively estimated but with greater uncertainty. Overall, we observe that exposure to foreign goods generates divergent effects on nationalists and cosmopolitans regarding their support for illiberal policies. The magnitude of these effects appears to be slightly greater for the European treatment than the Asian one; for example, the increase in anti-immigration attitudes is 11 pp for European SUVs versus 9 pp for Asian SUVs. However, when testing the differences between the estimators for each treatment using linear combinations, we failed to reject the null hypothesis in all cases.

These results are inconsistent with status threat mechanisms, commonly linked to cultural distance, which should be greater with Asian rather than European countries. This suggests that the egocentric or sociotropic mechanism is the main one that has been activated. An alternative explanation could arise from how these goods are perceived.

To investigate this further, we examine responses to a survey question: 'Which of the following words best describes the sports utility vehicle (SUV) brands in this survey?' The choices provided were luxurious, powerful, safe, and reliable. Table 1 displays the proportions of respondents associating each brand with these attributes. Using a Chi-squared test, we assess whether the distribution of these attributes varied significantly across treatments, revealing significant differences.

	American	**European**	**Asian**
Luxurious	8.17	**55.35*****	17.61***
Powerful	12.17	3.62***	4.82***
Safe	**44**	27.51***	**43.85**
Reliable	35.67	13.51***	33.72
$\chi^2_3 = 7.815$		1811.59***	93.02***

Table 1: Proportion classified in each category, and whether the description differs from the one used for American SUVs.
Note: The question prompt asked participants to describe the SUVs. To assess the differences in descriptions, we conducted a chi-squared test. The critical value was set at $\chi^2_3 = 7.815$. Results exceeding this threshold are marked with ***, indicating significant differences with 95% of confidence. Looking at each factor we indicated once the share was different at 95% of confidence with a $\chi^2_1 = 3.841$.

Respondents exposed to the European treatment often viewed these cars as luxurious, whereas safety and reliability were the key attributes associated with Asian and domestic cars. These perceptions could explain the larger, though not statistically significant, effects observed with the European treatment, potentially reflecting anti-elite sentiment. Such sentiments align with populist candidates who position themselves against the elite or establishment, perceived as out of touch with ordinary people's needs.[8] Hence, "luxury European" cars may be seen not merely as symbols of opulence but as emblems of the elite status that right-wing populism opposes.

The Pathway from Trade to Political Behavior

Having established that exposure to foreign goods can foster illiberal policy preferences and bolster support for right-wing populism, we narrow our analysis to nationalists to

[8]Previous research in marketing has established links between a preference for luxury goods and conservative political preferences, which may align with typical Republican supporters and some centrist Democrats (Shewani and Chan, 2022; Kim, Park, and Dubois, 2018). These studies suggest that the desire for luxury consumption may stem from an individual's aim to maintain or enhance their social status (Kim, Park, and Dubois, 2018).

understand how the treatment triggers these illiberal responses. We employ model-based causal mediation analysis, following the framework established by (Imai et al., 2011), and considering the observed mediator values in our survey. This method allows us to decompose the average treatment effect (ATE) into two components: the average causal mediated effect (ACME) and the average direct effect (ADE), providing clearer insight into the distinct causal influences.[9] Results for ACME are presented in Figure 5.

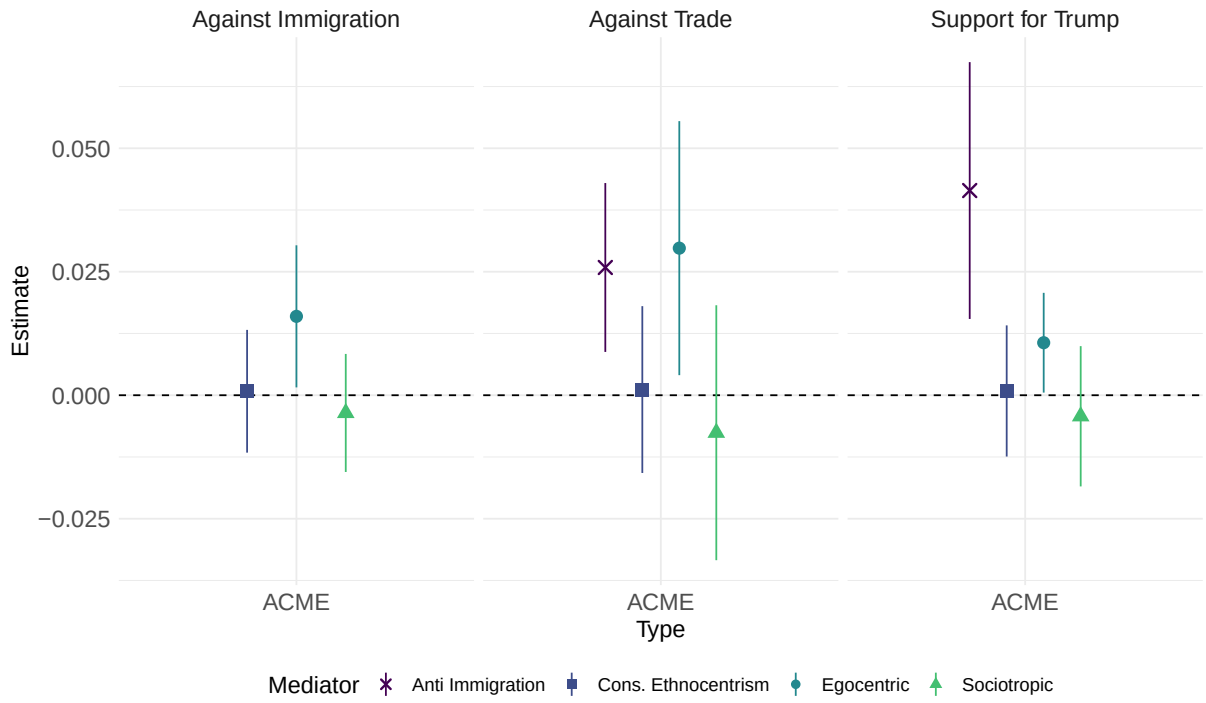

Figure 5: Average Mediated Causal Effect (high nationalists)
Note: The points indicate the estimated effect of automation risks, with lines displaying 95% confidence intervals. The outcome variables are all binary (0-1). The mediators include the following: 'against immigration' and 'consumption ethnocentrism', both of which are binary variables (0-1). It is important to note that these are only used as mediators for opposition to trade and support for Trump. The 'egocentric' and 'sociotropic beliefs' mediators are indexed variables ranging from 0 (indicating a negative evaluation) to 100 (indicating a positive evaluation). The proxy for egocentric beliefs pertains to the evaluation of international trade's impact on oneself and one's family. The proxy for sociotropic beliefs involves assessing trade's perceived benefits for the American economy. The sample is limited to those who are high nationalist (top 33th score in the nationalist index).

These results illustrate how xenophobic and egocentric beliefs mediate the effects of the treatment (exposure to foreign goods) on support for illiberal policies and Trump. To contextualize these findings, we quantify the contribution of these mediators to the total effects. Xenophobic beliefs account for 61% of the increase in support for Trump among those treated, and the egocentric pathway contributes 15%. Concerning the increase of illiberal policy preferences like trade opposition, xenophobic beliefs explain 31% of the

[9]See subsubsection C.2.1 for the details of the model.

effect and the egocentric pathway 36%. Importantly, the treatment effect on the support for Trump seems to be mainly mediated by the role of xenophobia and egocentric beliefs, as demonstrated by the null direct effect of the treatment documented in Figure C.3. Finally, contrary to our pre-registered expectations, the results show no significant effects mediated via ethnocentric mechanisms. Similarly, we fail to reject the null hypothesis regarding the sociotropic pathway.[10]

These findings highlight the complex interplay between economic phenomena such as trade and cultural grievances, including xenophobia and anti-elitism. These results are consistent with previous research that examined trade exposure through an observational lens (e.g., Hays, Lim, and Spoon, 2019). Furthermore, the results from the egocentric pathway strengthen the previously weak evidence for this mechanism, aligning with Rho and Tomz (2017), which found that selfish responses often predominate over altruistic ones when individuals understand the losers and winners. Our work expands on this by showing that even without explicitly presenting information about winners or losers, introducing individuals to consumption scenarios in a diversified open market indirectly leads them to form more egocentric attitudes.

Summary of Results

To summarize all analyses: first, experimental manipulations demonstrate that exposure to foreign goods affects political attitudes and behavior. Among nationalists –those with high levels of nationalism before treatment– we observe increased support for illiberal policies like anti-immigration and trade protectionism, as well as for the populist right-wing candidate, Trump (hypothesis 1). Conversely, among cosmopolitans, the same exposure diminishes these illiberal preferences and support for Trump (hypothesis 2). These results highlight an increasing divergence between nationalists and cosmopolitans concerning trade and immigration, with both groups moving further apart in their positions following exposure to foreign goods.

[10]Table C.15 presents the sensitivity analysis of these results to violation of the sequential ignorability assumption. While the unobserved variables could be related to the mediators, we believe it is unlikely they will be over these sensitivity scores.

Subsequently, our exploration into the reasons for these heterogeneous effects reveals no significant differences between the treatment effects of Asian or European cars, challenging the status threat hypothesis. However, European cars have a slightly, though not significantly, larger effect, potentially reflecting anti-elite sentiments due to their luxury associations. Finally, our mediation analysis provides statistically significant support for two pathways underlying these effects: xenophobic attitudes and egocentric beliefs. These pathways account for a considerable portion of the total effects, suggesting that the influence of foreign goods on illiberal preferences is largely mediated. Overall, we find empirical support for each hypothesis, constructing a comprehensive theory on the heterogeneous effects of trade exposure.

Conclusion

For decades, the rise of right-wing populism in democracies has presented a significant challenge to liberalism and potentially the global order. This article has contributed micro-level evidence on how exposure to a diversified marketplace can trigger such backlash, offering crucial insights for understanding the political resistance against economic globalization and challenging the conventional 'love of variety' models of international trade. This study enriches the debate on trade and immigration policy attitudes and challenges the theoretical discussion on trade benefits. Our innovative experimental design features subtle and realistic treatments that reveal how consumption-related decisions, like assessing the affordability of foreign products, can heighten economic nationalism and support for candidates like Trump among nationalists. Conversely, this exposure stimulates pro-globalization responses among cosmopolitans who encounter diverse open markets.

These findings have significant implications, demonstrating that even minimal interventions, such as exposure to foreign goods without explicit identification of the brand's country of origin, can trigger illiberal responses among nationalists. This indicates that everyday exposure to such goods could be a critical factor in shaping support for right-wing populists who advocate for economic nationalism. Moreover, these results point

to a grassroots-driven polarization of trade and immigration policy preferences. This perspective offers an alternative to the dominant narrative that elite framing primarily shapes mass attitudes, as suggested by prior research (e.g., Mutz, 2021; Ballard-Rosa, Goldstein, and Rudra, 2023). Furthermore, our study elucidates the mechanisms through which trade exposure heightens economic nationalism. We identify two pathways: the first, previously unclear, involves the activation of egocentric attitudes, while the second outlines a cultural path via the emergence of xenophobic beliefs.

Key takeaways from our study suggest that policymakers aiming to maximize welfare gains from trade must recognize that many highly nationalistic citizens may view these gains as threats. Thus, policymakers should implement proactive strategies to mitigate nationalists' potential egocentric or xenophobic responses. Additionally, our findings reveal that populist leaders promoting economic nationalism may appeal not only to vulnerable workers by emphasizing the risks of production ethnocentrism, but also by exploiting fears about a diverse marketplace from a consumption perspective. This highlights the broader implications and risks associated with nationalist-conservative rhetoric, demonstrating its capacity to create fear beyond mere economic vulnerabilities.

Our study provides a framework for investigating trade consumption preferences without relying on artificial priming prompts that lack external validity, as they do not reflect real consumption experiences. We hope our design encourages scholars to consider such subtle interventions and account for potential heterogeneities. However, there are numerous opportunities for further research. For instance, our experiment does not causally manipulate the mediators—xenophobic and egocentric beliefs (Green, Ha, and Bullock, 2010; Imai, Tingley, and Yamamoto, 2013). Future research could address this limitation by using double randomization to manipulate both exposure to foreign goods and the induction of xenophobic or egocentric beliefs. Additionally, further studies could explore the differences between European and Asian products in greater depth, using open-ended questions to examine the sentiments associated with these regions and the factors influencing these perceptions beyond associations with luxury. Finally, our study focused on the public in the United States and a specific industry. Replicating our experiment in

other countries would reveal how our findings generalize globally. Additionally, identifying other industries connected with different consumption areas, such as security, could further assess whether reactions to variety are heterogeneous.

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Online Appendix

Contents

A Survey Flow

A summary of the survey design and flow is provided in Table A.1.

Sequence of subject screens	**Content**	**Function**
1	Consent Form	Inform subjects of study's purpose and confirms their willingness to participate.
2	Eligibility	Screen subjects based on their citizenship and age.
3	Pre-treatment demographics	Assess representativeness of sample. Includes questions on gender, race, income, education, employment, occupation, zip code.
4	Pre-treatment politics and nationalism	Pre-treatment political questions about ideology and partisanship. Several questions on nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and ethnocentrism.
5	Treatment Screen	Information about SUVs and their respective webpages are displayed. Questions about price reasonableness, quality and comparative rankings.
6	Attention Check	We incorporate a simple attention check to make sure the respondents are paying attention. If they fail this attention check they will be moved to the end of the survey. We tell them: "This is an attention check. Please click "Moderately Likely".
7	Post-treatment questions	Questions about economic ethnocentrism, vote intentions, and public policy preferences.
8	Manipulation Check	Assess whether respondents were aware that the brands were American, European or Asian, and able to identify the type of products that they were asked to evaluate from a set of options such as chocolates, clothes, etc. SUVs being the right answer.
9	Thanks and subjects ID	We thank the respondents for their participation, debrief them about the experiment, and provide IDs for payment. We repeat contact information in case respondents have any questions.
10	End of the survey	

Table A.1: Summary of Survey Design and Flow

A.1 SUVs Webpages

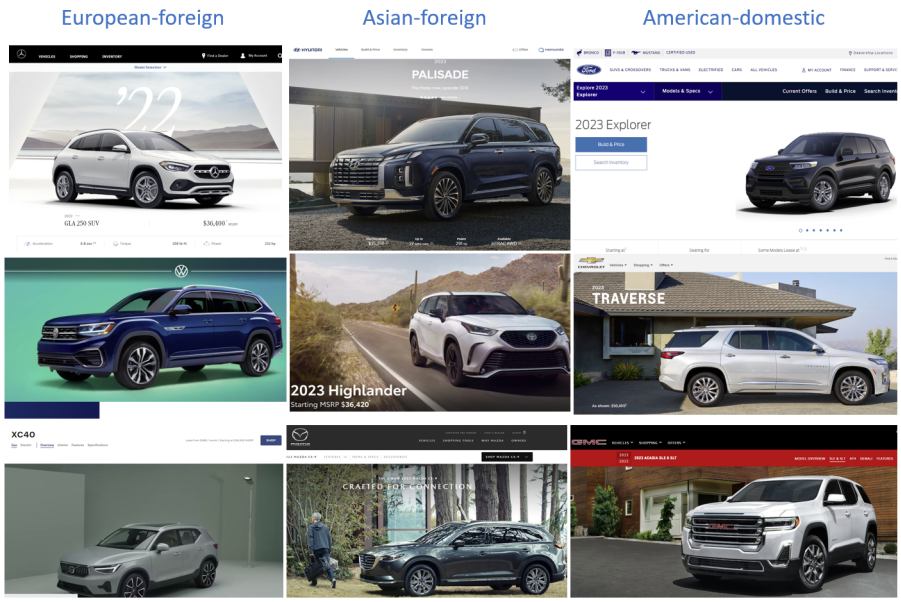

Figure A.1: Screenshots of the Website at the moment of fielding the experiment

B IRB and Registration

Our design was reviewed and granted an exemption by the IRB at the XXXX on August 12, 2022.

Our study was pre-registered at XXX.

C Results

C.1 Average Treatment Effects

C.1.1 Treatment = Foreign Following, we present tables and figures for the results of the main text and a robustness check related to the treatment defined as foreign (i.e., pooled Asian and European cars).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=Foreign	0.101***	0.080**	0.064**	0.025	0.025	-0.011	0.050
	(0.030)	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.025)	(0.033)
Middle Nationalism	-0.227***	-0.054	-0.234***	-0.175***	-0.175***	-0.027	-0.195***
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.029)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.026)	(0.034)
Low Nationalism	-0.386***	-0.092***	-0.388***	-0.197***	-0.197***	-0.059**	-0.503***
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.029)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.026)	(0.034)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.102***	-0.097**	-0.078**	-0.040	-0.040	0.013	-0.032
	(0.036)	(0.040)	(0.034)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.030)	(0.039)
Observations	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786
R^2	0.162	0.022	0.169	0.039	0.039	0.004	0.175
AIC	3066.377	3536.751	2710.986	3911.678	3911.678	1966.008	3516.703

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.2: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism level. This table is related to Figure 3 in the main text.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the full sample, meaning that the European and Asian treatments have been pooled together.

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=Foreign	0.099***	0.077**	0.064**	0.013	0.013	-0.007	0.051
	(0.030)	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.025)	(0.033)
Middle Nationalism	-0.220***	-0.039	-0.237***	-0.165***	-0.165***	-0.031	-0.199***
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.029)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.026)	(0.034)
Low Nationalism	-0.373***	-0.062*	-0.395***	-0.176***	-0.176***	-0.068***	-0.513***
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.029)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.026)	(0.034)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.096***	-0.092**	-0.074**	-0.024	-0.024	0.008	-0.031
	(0.036)	(0.039)	(0.034)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.030)	(0.039)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786
R^2	0.170	0.039	0.179	0.066	0.066	0.010	0.178
AIC	3049.577	3498.632	2685.985	3844.577	3844.577	1957.083	3515.456

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.3: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism level. This table is related to Figure 3 in the main text, but with control variables included.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the full sample, meaning that the European and Asian treatments have been pooled together. Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=Foreign	0.124***	0.074**	0.065**	-0.021	0.003	0.009	0.060*
	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.027)	(0.036)
Middle Nationalism	-0.195***	-0.047	-0.239***	-0.246***	-0.161***	-0.027	-0.189***
	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.039)	(0.027)	(0.036)
Low Nationalism	-0.353***	-0.073**	-0.395***	-0.346***	-0.177***	-0.071**	-0.502***
	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.039)	(0.028)	(0.037)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.116***	-0.071*	-0.068*	0.027	-0.015	-0.010	-0.035
	(0.039)	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.042)	(0.045)	(0.032)	(0.043)
White	0.070***	0.028	0.086***	0.038*	0.053**	-0.023	-0.011
	(0.019)	(0.021)	(0.018)	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.016)	(0.021)
Occupation RTI	0.002	-0.001	0.001	0.002	0.004**	-0.001	0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Job/Business Insecurity	0.016	0.016	-0.014	0.046**	0.043**	-0.023	-0.004
	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.017)	(0.019)	(0.021)	(0.015)	(0.019)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2449	2449	2449	2449	2449	2449	2449
R^2	0.168	0.031	0.187	0.094	0.064	0.015	0.175
AIC	2641.598	3037.181	2306.676	3042.078	3402.179	1712.436	3109.489

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.4: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism level. This table is related to Figure 3 in the main text, but with additional control variables (race & occupation) included.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the full sample, meaning that the European and Asian treatments have been pooled together. Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treatment=Foreign (no matter if they clicked)	0.082***	0.055*	0.085***	0.014	0.014	-0.016	0.048
	(0.027)	(0.030)	(0.026)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.023)	(0.030)
Middle Nationalism	-0.205***	-0.055*	-0.232***	-0.175***	-0.175***	-0.039*	-0.191***
	(0.028)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.023)	(0.031)
Low Nationalism	-0.355***	-0.080**	-0.388***	-0.203***	-0.203***	-0.072***	-0.494***
	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.024)	(0.031)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.084**	-0.066*	-0.094***	-0.028	-0.028	0.019	-0.034
	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.031)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.027)	(0.036)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3299	3299	3299	3299	3299	3299	3299
R^2	0.156	0.036	0.181	0.067	0.067	0.009	0.167
AIC	3593.038	4131.214	3234.234	4537.998	4537.998	2339.143	4202.287

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.5: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism levels. Treatment was defined without dropping those who did not click.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the full sample, meaning that the European and Asian treatments have been pooled together. Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

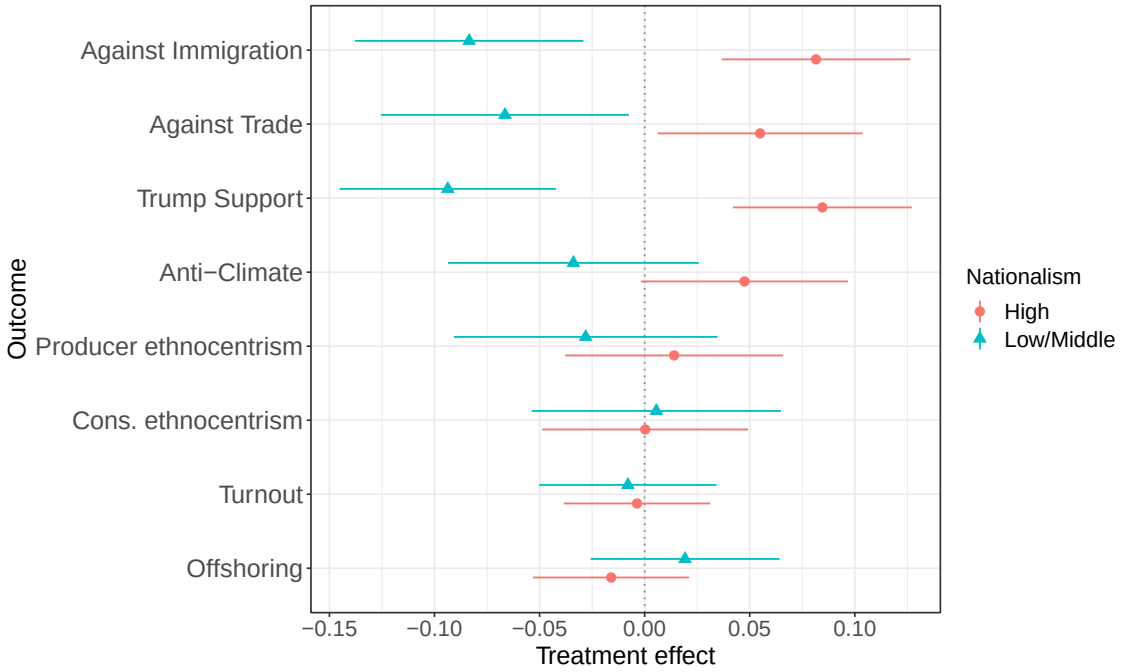

Figure C.2: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism levels. Treatment was defined without dropping those who did not click.
Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the full sample, meaning that the European and Asian treatments have been pooled together (N=3299). Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=Foreign	0.099***	0.077**	0.064**	0.013	0.013	-0.007	0.051
	(0.030)	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.025)	(0.033)
Middle Nationalism	-0.222***	-0.038	-0.224***	-0.160***	-0.160***	-0.022	-0.188***
	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.028)	(0.037)
Low Nationalism	-0.372***	-0.063*	-0.407***	-0.181***	-0.181***	-0.077***	-0.525***
	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.028)	(0.037)
Treated x Middle Nationalism	-0.094**	-0.093**	-0.091**	-0.031	-0.031	-0.005	-0.047
	(0.041)	(0.045)	(0.038)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.034)	(0.045)
Treated x Low Nationalism	-0.099**	-0.092**	-0.054	-0.016	-0.016	0.022	-0.013
	(0.042)	(0.046)	(0.039)	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.035)	(0.046)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786	2786
R^2	0.170	0.039	0.180	0.066	0.066	0.011	0.178
AIC	3051.566	3500.631	2687.021	3846.481	3846.481	1958.444	3516.847

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.6: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism levels w/interactions by low and middle.
Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). This analysis includes the full sample, meaning that the European and Asian treatments have been pooled together. Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

C.1.2 Treatment= Europe Following, we present tables and figures for the results of the main text and a robustness check related to the treatment defined as Europe (i.e., only European cars).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=European	0.113***	0.092**	0.089***	0.007	0.007	-0.010	0.048
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.033)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.029)	(0.038)
Middle Nationalism	-0.228***	-0.058*	-0.228***	-0.169***	-0.169***	-0.033	-0.187***
	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.030)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.034)
Low Nationalism	-0.384***	-0.087**	-0.394***	-0.204***	-0.204***	-0.053**	-0.512***
	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.030)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.027)	(0.035)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.102**	-0.114**	-0.089**	-0.019	-0.019	0.020	-0.033
	(0.042)	(0.046)	(0.040)	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.035)	(0.045)
Observations	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860
R^2	0.150	0.021	0.164	0.034	0.034	0.003	0.178
AIC	2084.032	2361.573	1867.678	2626.077	2626.077	1355.599	2345.215

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.7: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism level. This table is related to Figure 4 in the main text.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=European	0.111***	0.089**	0.089***	-0.004	-0.004	-0.008	0.048
	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.033)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.029)	(0.038)
Middle Nationalism	-0.219***	-0.041	-0.229***	-0.157***	-0.157***	-0.036	-0.191***
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.027)	(0.035)
Low Nationalism	-0.370***	-0.061*	-0.397***	-0.184***	-0.184***	-0.059**	-0.520***
	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.027)	(0.035)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.098**	-0.111**	-0.084**	-0.005	-0.005	0.018	-0.031
	(0.042)	(0.045)	(0.040)	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.035)	(0.046)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860
R^2	0.159	0.040	0.174	0.064	0.064	0.007	0.179
AIC	2073.155	2334.133	1855.587	2577.783	2577.783	1358.024	2351.496

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.8: Treatment effect of exposure to euro goods by nationalism level. This table is related to Figure 4 in the main text, but with control variables included.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treatment=Europe (no matter if they clicked)	0.088***	0.061*	0.091***	-0.002	-0.002	-0.011	0.054
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.027)	(0.035)
Middle Nationalism	-0.204***	-0.054*	-0.228***	-0.169***	-0.169***	-0.042*	-0.182***
	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.024)	(0.032)
Low Nationalism	-0.353***	-0.082**	-0.385***	-0.210***	-0.210***	-0.065***	-0.498***
	(0.030)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.025)	(0.032)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.085**	-0.085**	-0.091**	-0.011	-0.011	0.027	-0.044
	(0.039)	(0.041)	(0.037)	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.032)	(0.042)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2196	2196	2196	2196	2196	2196	2196
R^2	0.147	0.038	0.167	0.062	0.062	0.007	0.170
AIC	2422.843	2738.069	2204.690	3039.733	3039.733	1643.172	2795.952

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.9: Treatment effect of exposure to euro goods by nationalism levels. Treatment was defined without dropping those who did not click.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=European	0.113***	0.092**	0.089***	0.007	0.007	-0.010	0.048
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.033)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.029)	(0.038)
Middle Nationalism	-0.228***	-0.054	-0.222***	-0.166***	-0.166***	-0.021	-0.183***
	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.028)	(0.037)
Low Nationalism	-0.384***	-0.091**	-0.401***	-0.207***	-0.207***	-0.066**	-0.516***
	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.028)	(0.037)
Treated x Middle Nationalism	-0.102**	-0.121**	-0.100**	-0.025	-0.025	-0.003	-0.041
	(0.047)	(0.051)	(0.045)	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.039)	(0.051)
Treated x Low Nationalism	-0.102**	-0.105*	-0.074	-0.013	-0.013	0.049	-0.024
	(0.050)	(0.054)	(0.047)	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.041)	(0.054)
Observations	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860	1860
R^2	0.150	0.021	0.164	0.034	0.034	0.004	0.178
AIC	2086.032	2363.480	1869.347	2628.029	2628.029	1355.863	2347.103

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.10: Treatment effect of exposure to euro goods by nationalism levels w/interactions by low and middle.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

C.1.3 Treatment = Asian Following, we present tables and figures for the results of the main text and a robustness check related to the treatment defined as Asian (i.e., only Asian cars).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=Asian	0.090***	0.068*	0.039	0.043	0.043	-0.012	0.051
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.032)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.028)	(0.038)
Middle Nationalism	-0.227***	-0.049	-0.234***	-0.177***	-0.177***	-0.018	-0.197***
	(0.031)	(0.035)	(0.029)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.034)
Low Nationalism	-0.386***	-0.097***	-0.388***	-0.195***	-0.195***	-0.068***	-0.502***
	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.029)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.035)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.101**	-0.079*	-0.067*	-0.061	-0.061	0.006	-0.032
	(0.042)	(0.046)	(0.039)	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.034)	(0.046)
Observations	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858
R^2	0.155	0.016	0.163	0.041	0.041	0.007	0.175
AIC	2008.575	2361.652	1750.232	2607.144	2607.144	1275.102	2349.678

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.11: Treatment effect of exposure to foreign goods by nationalism level. This table is related to Figure 4 in the main text.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=Asian	0.087**	0.067*	0.039	0.031	0.031	-0.008	0.052
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.032)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.028)	(0.038)
Middle Nationalism	-0.221***	-0.034	-0.238***	-0.171***	-0.171***	-0.023	-0.201***
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.029)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.035)
Low Nationalism	-0.371***	-0.064*	-0.395***	-0.173***	-0.173***	-0.082***	-0.513***
	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.030)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.026)	(0.035)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.093**	-0.073	-0.066*	-0.043	-0.043	-0.000	-0.032
	(0.042)	(0.046)	(0.039)	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.034)	(0.046)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858
R^2	0.165	0.035	0.174	0.065	0.065	0.015	0.180
AIC	1996.682	2336.359	1736.404	2571.479	2571.479	1269.756	2348.520

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.12: Treatment effect of exposure to asian goods by nationalism level. This table is related to Figure 4 in the main text, but with control variables included.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treatment=Asian (no matter if they clicked)	0.075**	0.050	0.080***	0.031	0.031	-0.023	0.042
	(0.031)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.026)	(0.035)
Middle Nationalism	-0.204***	-0.051	-0.229***	-0.176***	-0.176***	-0.035	-0.192***
	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.024)	(0.032)
Low Nationalism	-0.355***	-0.081**	-0.392***	-0.201***	-0.201***	-0.079***	-0.495***
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.024)	(0.032)
Treated x Low/Mid Nationalism	-0.082**	-0.049	-0.099***	-0.046	-0.046	0.013	-0.025
	(0.038)	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.031)	(0.042)
Demographics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2211	2211	2211	2211	2211	2211	2211
R^2	0.153	0.031	0.179	0.069	0.069	0.011	0.167
AIC	2379.366	2786.646	2125.583	3042.374	3042.374	1505.922	2823.490

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.13: Treatment effect of exposure to asian goods by nationalism levels. Treatment was defined without dropping those who did not click.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile). Demographic control variables were included (age, gender, income, and education).

	(1) Anti-Immigration	(2) Anti-Trade	(3) Support Trump	(4) Cons. Ethnocentrism	(5) Prod. Ethnocentrism	(6) Offshoring	(7) Anti-Climate
Treated=Asian	0.090***	0.068*	0.039	0.043	0.043	-0.012	0.051
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.032)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.028)	(0.038)
Middle Nationalism	-0.228***	-0.054	-0.222***	-0.166***	-0.166***	-0.021	-0.183***
	(0.033)	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.027)	(0.037)
Low Nationalism	-0.384***	-0.091**	-0.401***	-0.207***	-0.207***	-0.066**	-0.516***
	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.028)	(0.037)
Treated x Middle Nationalism	-0.098**	-0.069	-0.092**	-0.083	-0.083	0.010	-0.058
	(0.047)	(0.052)	(0.044)	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.039)	(0.052)
Treated x Low Nationalism	-0.104**	-0.091*	-0.040	-0.038	-0.038	0.001	-0.003
	(0.048)	(0.053)	(0.045)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.040)	(0.053)
Observations	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858	1858
R^2	0.155	0.016	0.164	0.042	0.042	0.007	0.175
AIC	2010.554	2363.471	1750.768	2608.451	2608.451	1277.046	2350.509

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table C.14: Treatment effect of exposure to asian goods by nationalism levels w/interactions by low and middle.

Note: All variables are binary (0-1), with 1 indicating stronger support for the statement questions. The nationalism clusters are categorized as follows: high (top 33rd percentile scores in the nationalism index), middle, and low have been pooled together (bottom 66th percentile).

C.2 Mediation Analysis

C.2.1 Specifics

$$ATE = E[Y(1) - Y(0)] \quad (1)$$

$$ACME(t) = E[Y(t, M(1)) - Y(t, M(0))] \quad (2)$$

$$ADE(t) = E[Y(1, M(t)) - Y(0, M(t))] \quad (3)$$

with $Y(t)$ representing the expected outcome of interest under a given treatment status ($t \in [0, 1]$) and $M(t)$ denote the mediator's value. The outcome variables of interest in our analyses are whether individuals exposed to foreign goods increase their support for populist leaders and illiberal policy preferences. The mediators in this context are proxies for xenophobic attitudes, ethnocentrism, and egocentric and sociotropic preferences.

C.2.2 Sensitivity

Table C.15: Sensitivity Analysis

Mediator	**Against Immigration**	**Against Trade**	**Support for Trump**
Sociotropic	-0.2	-0.43	-0.23
Egocentric	-0.23	-0.43	-0.15
Anti Immigration		0.26	0.4
Cons. Ethnocentrism	0.19	0.27	0.2

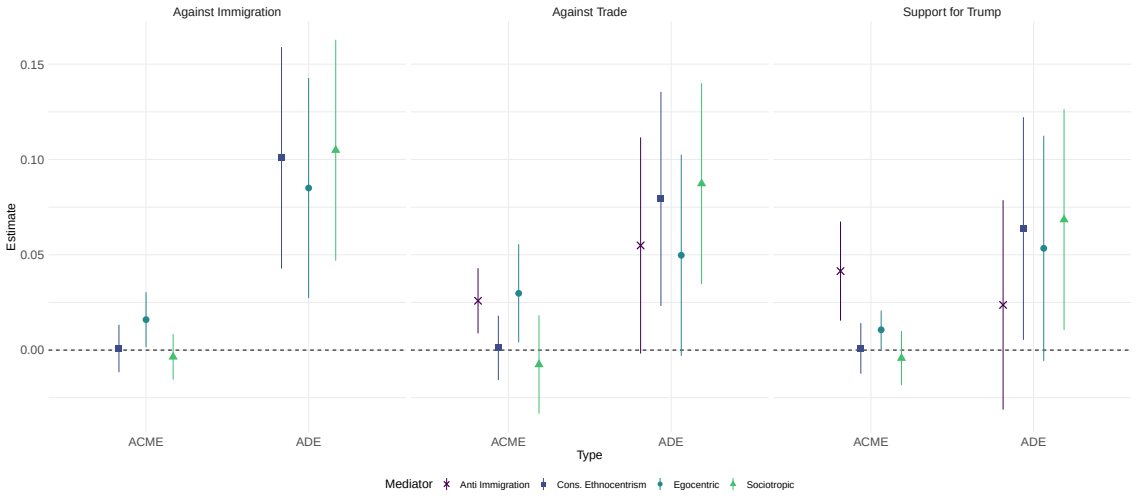

Figure C.3: Average Mediated Causal Effect

Note: The points indicate the estimated effect of automation risks, with lines displaying 95% confidence intervals.