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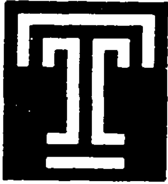

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LINKING SELF AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE:

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SRI LANKAN SOCIAL IDENTITY

A Dissertation

Submitted to

the Temple University Graduate Board

---

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

---

by

Mark Allan Freeman

May 1998

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ABSTRACT

Title: Linking Self and Social Structure: The Psychology of Sri Lankan Social Identity
Candidate's Name: Mark Allan Freeman
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy
Temple University, 1998
Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair: Dr. Louise H. Kidder

Social psychological processes govern the construction of social identity, but the manner in which these processes are elaborated is constrained by the social structure. An individual's location in the social structure – "objective" identity – is linked in systematic ways with his or her perceptions of which "subjective" identities are constructed as most important or salient within the self-concept. This interactionist approach was the starting point for an analysis of social identity in Sri Lanka. Eleven identities were examined: nation, social class, age, religion, caste, occupation, race, gender, educational level, town, and political party. A sample of 703 working adults provided data for the study in response to a questionnaire.

Six hypotheses were tested. First, the self-esteem hypothesis stated that individuals will emphasize the subjective importance of identities on which they are "objectively" highly ranked. Second, the distinctiveness hypothesis stated that individuals psychologically emphasize the salience of identities on which they are minorities in their usual social groups. Third, the social change hypothesis predicted a decline in the salience of "traditional" identities and an increase in the salience of "modern" with increasing levels of exposure to urban-industrial development. Fourth,

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the status inconsistency hypothesis stated that individuals will emphasize the salience of a single highly ranked identity and will de-emphasize that of a single low-status identity in the self-concept. Fifth, the individualism hypothesis predicted specific relationships between personal and social identities in the self-concept. Finally, the contact hypothesis predicted that intergroup social contact would influence the subjective construction of contact-relevant identities. All hypotheses were supported to some extent, with the exception of the individualism hypothesis.

In addition, the structure of the self-concept was examined through a multidimensional scaling analysis based on a task where respondents sorted the 11 identities in terms of their perceived similarity. The data revealed that the major dimension structuring the self-concept was a distinction between "collective" identities, based on real social groups, and "non-collective" identities deriving from demographic categories without such a collective sense of belonging. The findings were discussed for their relevance to Sri Lanka studies, identity studies generally, and to future cross-cultural research.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The strategy for distributing the 1,000 questionnaires, which made a study of this magnitude possible, was devised by my wife, Ruvani. I would also like to acknowledge her unflagging support, emotional as well as practical, throughout all stages of this project. I dedicate this thesis to her.

And thank you to my daughter Duranya for her tolerance of the long hours I spent focused on the computer screen instead of her antics, and of my black moods that this project often inspired along the way to its completion.

I would also like to thank the many friends and friends of friends who distributed the questionnaires. First, and especially to my mother-in-law Indrani Seneviratne who traveled through Colombo and arranged for me to distribute the forms throughout the Colombo schools. Thank you also to my friends who made it seem a pleasure to take time out of their own busy lives and help me to distribute the forms in the more far-flung locales: Priyantha Wickramasinghe and his wife Renuka, Thilak Ananda Bandara Herat, Ajith Gooneratne, W.G. Premasiri, Margie and Upali Dharmasiri, and Upali's brother Ananda Dharmasiri. The project would have been impossible without the generous assistance of these people, as well as the many respondents who spent their time to complete the somewhat lengthy questionnaires. I (an apologetically self-centered American) have never ceased to be touched and amazed by the gracious hospitality that was exemplified by all those who helped bring this project to its completion, and that for me is the defining feature of the Sri Lankan national character.

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I would also like to acknowledge the assistance of several academic advisors who were instrumental in the planning, execution, and final presentation of the results of this project. Most importantly Louise Kidder for her insightful methodological guidance, Marianne Jaeger for her statistical insights, and Dr. Ralph Rosnow for his insights both statistical and stylistic.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Barbara and Gerald Freeman, who kept their anxieties in check and supported Ru and I in all our decisions (even those I know inwardly they did not agree with) and who, moreover, withstood the absence of their first grandchild for two years. Their example of unconditional support and positive regard was positively heroic.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the 17 months I was in Sri Lanka conducting this study of social identity. I was frequently asked about the topic of my research. not only by friends and relatives. but by inquisitive passersby on the street. The response of one such Sinhalese gentleman on the streets of the town of Kandy was typical: "Ah! Social identity! That is a good topic. and I think you have come to the right place!" I smiled at comments like these. but at the same time realized that they mirrored my own unspoken belief that Sri Lanka was indeed somehow the "right place" to explore my chosen topic.

From a methodological perspective. the compact size of the country was a major advantage. in that it made a comprehensive study of an entire population more feasible. But in addition. social identities like race. nationality. class. and political party were. or so I felt. simply central in the self-conception of the average Sri Lankan[1] to a degree not typical of citizens of many other countries. As with the gentleman's comment. my conviction was not the product of any systematic perusal of the cross-cultural literature on Sri Lanka. Rather, I had acquired this point of view through impressionistic observation,[2] a knowledge of current events, and logical deduction based on indirectly relevant cross-cultural psychological theory.

Importance of Social Identity in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka since 1983 has been engaged in an ethnically based civil war between a militant section of the Sri Lankan Tamil minority fighting for a separate homeland in the

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North and East of the island, and a Sinhalese-majority Sri Lankan government, struggling to keep the island under one rule. From a psychological point of view, the conflict – which has claimed over 50,000 military and civilian lives since it began – centrally involves a clash between racial,[3] religious (most Sinhalese are Buddhist, and most Tamils are Hindu), geographic, and linguistic identities (the mother-tongue of the Sinhalese is Sinhala, and that of Sri Lankan Tamils is Tamil), as well as conflicting definitions of national identity. Secondarily, because one major cause of the conflict has been a mutual perception of relative lack of access to higher education and to influential government jobs, the conflict also engages occupational, educational, and class identities.

Political identities or political party identifications are also extraordinarily strong in Sri Lanka. Their potency derives in part from the fact that political identities are based on pervasive patron-client networks that determine local power hierarchies and community access to state resources (Jayanntha, 1992; Perera, 1985). In other words, your job, your friendships, and your social status can depend heavily on the fortunes of your party in the latest election, and the depth of your connections to it. In the words of one social scientist, politics are the "consuming passion" of the Ceylonese (Jupp, 1978), while another, an anthropologist working at the village level, notes that they are "extraordinarily strong in all sections of Sri Lankan society....People and whole families are habitually referred to by their party identification: 'he is an SLFPer,' 'they are an old UNP family'" (Spencer, 1990, p. 211).

Sri Lanka's status as a small, poor, and densely populated industrially developing country is also associated with intense group identification. Coveted resources such as

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arable land, government jobs, and slots in the public higher education system are chronically in high demand and short supply. Conflict over these limited resources along racial, political, caste, and class lines has undoubtedly played a role in intensifying the identities associated with these social categories (LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Marga Institute, 1981; Sherif & Sherif, 1973). Also, because these resources are distributed inequitably, consciousness of group affiliations are especially intense (Gurr, 1970; Marga Institute, 1981; Roberts, 1979).

Yet another structural condition augmenting the average Sri Lankan's overall consciousness of social identity is the fact that, as an industrially developing country, Sri Lanka is undergoing profound social change. New socioeconomic realities such as the expansion of industrialization and wage labor, of an open-market economy, and of mass political mobilization contribute to the erosion of older, traditional status systems based on caste, age, village, and gender, while simultaneously reinforcing those based on education, occupation, class, and political party. Friction between the old and new systems of stratification is inevitable, and the inconsistencies among various dimensions of identity heightens the psychological significance of social identity issues in general for the average Sri Lankan (cf. Stryker & Macke, 1978).

Finally, Sri Lanka's culture is a collectivistic one (Freeman, 1997; Hofstede, 1980, 1991; Triandis, 1995).[4] Briefly, collectivism describes a generalized tendency to place the goals and needs of one's important in-groups ahead of personal goals and needs, whereas individualism refers to the opposite tendency. Sri Lankans, then, are

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culturally "primed" to identify strongly with important social groups and categories (Deaux. 1996: Triandis. 1988. 1989).

For these reasons. Sri Lanka seems a fitting site to conduct a study of social identity since so many structural antecedents to intense social identification with groups and social categories of all varieties appear to be at work. In this sense. there is likely to be no shortage of "raw material" for the present study.

A Psychological Approach to Social Identity

A General Definition

Social identities are psychological constructs. They are defined as "those aspects of the self-concept which derive from his [sic] knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel. 1981, p. 255). Social identities thus denote the attitudes individuals have concerning their membership in various social groups and categories (Deaux, 1996).

Macro-Social and Psychological Approaches in Sri Lanka Studies

In the scholarly literature on Sri Lanka, the concept of social identity is virtually always invoked at a macro-social or group level of analysis, in the context of historical. cultural, or political studies of the country's social structure. In truth the conditions mentioned above accounting for the overall importance of social identities in Sri Lanka are all macro-social or cultural variables. From this theoretical perspective, because the units of analysis are groups and not individuals, social identity refers to a kind of "average" or "typical" set of attitudes associated with membership in a particular social

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group. Because macro-social analyses of social identity are concerned solely with the collective behavior of groups, the content of a group's social identity is theoretically determined entirely by the character of the macro-social forces acting on that group within the larger social structure: its collective sense of relative deprivation, its historical background, its conflicts with other groups, and so on. Social identities are the product of these larger social forces, which in some undefined manner are psychologically assimilated by the individuals that constitute the corresponding social groups.

The fact that psychological factors also operate in the construction of social identities – indeed, the fact that individuals have any active, independent role to play in the construction of their social identities at all – has been relatively ignored in this literature. This is a peculiar state of affairs for a construct that is fundamentally psychological in nature. For, from a psychological perspective, social identities are not just standard labels, passively assimilated by members of "objectively" defined social categories,[5] but rather are dynamic, psychological constructs that can be imbued with a wide variety of subjective meanings.

Granted, the "raw material" for the construction of various social identities is supplied by one's objective location in the social structure in terms of class, occupation, ethnicity, and so on. From a subjective perspective, however, there are many different ways of perceiving, evaluating, and finally synthesizing this raw material into a coherent self-concept. For instance, specific social identities may be perceived as central to one's overall self-concept or as more peripheral to self-definition; they can be evaluated positively or negatively; they can be perceived as inconsistent or as compatible with other

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social identities. Because individuals are thus active agents in the construction of their own social identities, two members of same objective social category may subjectively construe the meaning of that category membership quite differently, and may also behave differently in situations that are relevant to their membership in that social category.

This appreciation of individual differences in the construction of social identities is the defining feature of a psychological approach to the topic. Averaging this diversity of group-relevant self-conceptions within a social group, treating the individual differences as "error" may be well and good from a historical or political scientific point of view, but not when the analysis is psychological in nature. From such a perspective, rather, we are interested in how individual level variables – psychological needs and motivations, personality traits, and unique life experiences, for example – interact with social structural factors in the construction of social identity.

Clearly, both types of processes are at work. In any society it would be fatuous to assert that individuals are completely free to construct their social identities in any way they see fit. Some meanings are defined by the social structure, and are not open to individual interpretation, at least for those who consider themselves members of society: being a doctor is more prestigious than being a menial laborer; being a member of a minority group carries definite connotations; one's culture imposes certain standard definitions of maleness and femaleness. However, the other extreme position, that social identities are completely determined by the social structure, is just as precarious. Such a position excludes the possibility of individual change, and is based on an evidently false

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premise: that all members of a group construct the meaning of belonging to that group in an equivalent manner.

A Social Psychological Model

In short, what these psychological and social structural models of social identity present are alternative theories of how merely objective membership in a social category becomes a subjective attitude about that category membership, incorporating affective, cognitive, and behavioral elements at the individual level. In a "pure" macro-social model, these subjective elements are determined by social structural processes that impinge on the group as a unit. In a "pure" psychological model, what matters is how the individual constructs these category memberships, and in principle at least, the possibilities for subjective identity construction are limitless.

The social psychological, interactionist approach adopted in the present study of social identity can be classified as falling between these two extremes, in assuming that psychological processes do govern the construction of social identities, but that the manner in which these processes are elaborated is constrained by the social structure and one's overall location in it.

> There is nothing illogical about viewing human social behaviour [sic] as importantly the consequences of constraining and sometimes coercive processes while recognizing that in principle those processes are open to denial, rejection, or modification. We can see social behavior as constructed, at the same time recognizing that probabilities differ for various structural elements entering the construction and for various outcomes of the [psychological] constructive process. We can understand that all possible interactional sequences and all possible outcomes of those interaction sequences are not equiprobable....*The proper question is not whether human social behaviour is constrained or constructed; it is both.*

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> *The proper question is under what circumstances will that behaviour be more or less heavily constrained, more or less open to creative [psychological] constructions.* [italics added] (Stryker, 1987, pp. 92-93)

An appropriate descriptive metaphor for such an interactionist model of social identity is that of a game of cards. The cards in one's hand are equivalent to one's objective social category memberships (e.g., high social class, minority racial group status, low caste, etc.). Macro-social processes enter into this metaphor as the rules of the particular game one is playing. Just as different game rules can alter the assessment of one's hand of cards, different macro-social processes can encourage different subjective assessments of one's social identities. Psychological processes, on the other hand, figure in the metaphor as different strategies adopted by individual actors to win the game or, in this case, to construct the most positive, meaningful, and satisfying self-concept possible within the constraints set by the prevailing social structure (the rules) and one's location in it (one's hand of cards).

The metaphor can, of course, be taken too far. The social structure and the psychology of the individual, for instance, interact in ways that rules and strategies in a card game do not (Charon, 1992; Hewitt, 1991; Stryker, 1980; Weigert, Teitge, & Teitge, 1986). The metaphor also may imply to some readers a degree of choice in the subjective construction of identity that is not entirely appropriate, particularly for those who occupy social categories that are enmeshed in structures of prejudice and discrimination. For members of such groups, the ongoing struggle to construct a positive, satisfying, and consensually validated social identity is not as indeterminate or "game-like" as some

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constructionist models seem to imply. Nonetheless, the metaphor is useful in that it aptly describes how the three components of this model – one's objective social identities, the social structure, and psychological processes in the individual – interact in the construction of a subjective self-concept. We need merely to keep in mind that more powerful "players," powerful by virtue of their majority group status, economic ascendancy, social influence, political power and so on, have a greater capacity to define the rules of the game (the social structure), and that they invariably do this in a way that prejudicially favors membership in their own social groups, and penalizes or derogates out-group membership.

Objectives of the Study

Application to Sri Lanka Studies

The first broad objective of the present study was to assess exactly how an analysis of Sri Lankan social identity based on this interactionist social psychological model can enrich to the extant literature on the subject, which is almost exclusively macro-social in orientation. I suggest that it complements the existing body of literature in two ways. First, it provides data to complement some of these macro-social theories concerning Sri Lankan social identity. As was noted above, in several such theories the subjectivity of social identity is taken for granted as a key component, but is not empirically examined. Theories of Sri Lankan nationalism abound, for example, and virtually all place substantial weight on the subjective importance of national identity, but I am not aware of any that have actually asked Sri Lankan citizens about their perceptions of their own national identity. The present study, because it begins at the individual

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level, provides data that help to reinforce this weak link in macro-social theories of Sri Lankan social identity.

Second, the present study tested six general hypotheses and conducted several exploratory analyses concerning the interaction of social structure and psychological processes in the construction of a subjective self-concept. Studies of Sri Lankan social identity have not considered the role of individual psychology in any meaningful way, and so the present research breaks new ground in this area by examining this entirely different category of antecedents of identity.

Application to Identity Theory

From the range of possible social categories, the following 11 were selected for analysis: nation, social class, age, religion, caste, occupation, race, gender, educational level, town or village of residence, and political party. These were chosen because they are applicable to and are of at least moderate significance for all respondents. A measure of identity "salience" was constructed such that respondents indicated how important each identity was to their concepts of themselves. These importance ratings comprise the dependent variables used in the tests of the six a priori hypotheses.

The first of these, the self-esteem hypothesis, was derived from the motivational foundation of Tajfel's social identity theory: that "individuals strive to achieve or to maintain positive social identity," and that one of the ways that they accomplish this is to make "favorable comparisons...between the in-group and some relevant out-groups." (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 16) From this theoretical foundation, it was hypothesized that aspects of one's "objective" social location that are socially valued will be perceived

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subjectively as very important within an individual's self-concept. Within the present study, this hypothesis involves socioeconomic or otherwise evaluatively ranked social structural dimensions. For instance, according to the hypothesis, wealthy individuals should rank "class" identity as more important to their definitions of themselves than will those at the lower end of the economic spectrum. High caste individuals should view caste as more important within their self-concepts than low-caste individuals.

In short, because it can be assumed that individuals are motivated to think of themselves as good, capable, and powerful relative to others, they should emphasize social identities that most effectively support such self-conceptions. The socioeconomic identities caste, class, occupation, and education – and two others specific to Sri Lankan culture, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 – provide highly ranked individuals with a "ready-made," consensually validated framework for making favorable social comparisons and thus maintaining a positive self-conception.

Second is the distinctiveness hypothesis, based on the work of William McGuire and his associates (McGuire, 1984; McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978; McGuire, McGuire, & Winton, 1979; McGuire & McGuire, 1981, 1982), which states that, "one defines the self in terms of a demographic characteristic...to the extent that one is in the minority on it in one's usual social groups." (McGuire & McGuire, 1988, p. 108) According to this hypothesis, identities which incorporate a strong majority / minority component in the present study, religion and political party, should be considered particularly important or self-defining by members of the minority group.

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The third is the social change hypothesis, derived from modernization and social change theory (Inkeles & Smith, 1974; Kahl, 1968; Rau, 1980; Schnaiberg, 1970; Yang, 1988). It begins with the assumption that processes of change or economic development have had a significant impact on the way the Sri Lankan society is structured. Some dimensions of the social structure have become more important (e.g., occupation, education, class), whereas others have diminished in importance (e.g., caste, gender, age, town / village of residence). Because social identities are based on these dimensions of the social structure, these processes of change – economic, social, and cultural – should also affect how individuals living in that society construct their own place within it (i.e., their social identity). Based on the observation that these processes of change have had their greatest impact in urban settings, it was predicted that among such individuals "traditional" social identities – caste, age, gender, and town / village of residence – would be perceived as subjectively less important than among those living in rural locales. Conversely, it was predicted that those living in urban areas would also perceive achieved socioeconomic, "modern" social identities (occupation, class, educational level) as subjectively more important.

Fourth is the status inconsistency hypothesis, which was derived from status inconsistency theory (Stryker & Macke, 1978), and which follows from the same assumption on which the self-esteem hypothesis is based: individuals strive to achieve or maintain a positive self-image (cf. Berger, Norman, Blackwell, & Smith, 1992; Lenski, 1966). As formulated in the present study, it states that when an individual's objective rankings on status dimensions – caste, class, occupation, education – do not coincide, but

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rather are "mixed" low and high rankings, the importance of a single high status ranking will be particularly emphasized, and that of the low status ranking particularly de-emphasized in the self-concepts of such individuals.[6] Those possessing a single high status identity should regard that identity as very salient, since it represents the only socially sanctioned route to positive self-conception; by the same token, individuals possessing a single low status identity should de-emphasize that identity within their self-concepts, since it represents a threat to their otherwise high social status. Common examples of status-inconsistency in Sri Lanka include the wealthy, less educated, low-caste businessman (all relatively low status in this environment except on the class dimension), and the high-caste, less educated, poor farmer (low status on all but caste).

Fifth is the individualism hypothesis, which actually consists of two mutually exclusive hypotheses. In addition to social identities, which identify the self as a member of a social group, the self-concept also contains an individual's personal identity, which is defined as that part of the self-concept that differentiates the self from others (e.g., traits, abilities, preferences, feelings; see Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). The importance of personal identity was assessed using a 15-item scale. One hypothesis was that the importance of personal identity would be positively correlated with that of achieved social identities such as occupation, class, and education, and negatively correlated with that of ascribed social identities. A second, mutually exclusive hypothesis stated that the importance of personal identity would be negatively correlated with that of all social identities, based on the assertion that the "individual self" and the "social self" are broadly opposed to one another within the self concept (cf. Reid & Deaux, 1996;

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Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991). Both of these possibilities were derived from contradictory findings within the literature on individualism-collectivism theory (Triandis, 1995; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988; Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990).

The sixth hypothesis is the contact hypothesis which, as formulated here, consists of three parts. First, the hypothesis predicts that for a given category of social identity (e.g., race), frequent impersonal social contact with a wide variety of exemplars of that category (e.g., with Tamils, Muslims, and Sinhalese) will serve to promote the importance of that category of social identity within an individual's self-concept. For example, a Sinhalese individual living in a community where impersonal social contacts with individuals of many different races (in Sri Lanka, Tamil and Muslim minorities) are frequent should view their racial identity as more self-defining than will a member of a racially homogenous community.

The second part of the contact hypothesis, on the other hand, stated that more intimate social contact (e.g., friendship) with members of other groups should decrease the salience of the identity on which the intergroup difference exists. In short, it was predicted that impersonal intergroup contact would heighten the salience of the contact-relevant identity, whereas intimate intergroup contact would lessen it.

In addition to these a priori hypotheses, two other aspects of the self-concept were examined in an exploratory fashion. Data concerning the perceived similarities of the eleven categories of identity were collected and subjected to a multidimensional scaling analysis. Many macro-social theories of Sri Lankan social identity make explicit

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statements about the relationships between certain categories of identity; these data will help us evaluate the validity these statements. Secondly, because of the important issues surrounding racial identity in the Sri Lankan context, a separate measure of racial identity was included in the analysis. This measure permitted a closer focus on the structure and correlates of racial identity in this cultural setting.

Application to Cross-Cultural Studies

Because most psychological research on identity theory has been conducted using North American or European samples, these data from Sri Lanka naturally beg the question of whether the same theories hold true in this markedly different culture. The third and final broad objective of the present study, then, was to provide a cross-cultural perspective on these theories of social identity.

In fact, cultural variables can enter in to any of the three components of the general model outlined above. To continue with the game of cards metaphor, culture can determine which cards are possible in one's hand, that is, which identities are possible in a given social context. Caste, for instance, is an important social identity in India and Sri Lanka, but is non-existent in North America. Culture can also influence the rules of the game, by redefining how those identities are constituted in the social structure. A broad social policy of multiculturalism, for instance, should encourage minority and immigrant groups to emphasize their racial or national identity, respectively, while one of assimilationism should discourage such an emphasis. Finally, culture can also influence the strategies employed by individual players, that is, the psychological processes by which a constellation of objective social category memberships gets constructed as a

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positive, integrated subjective self-concept. Self-esteem, for instance, may be a very important motivation in the US: to judge by the volume of research on the topic, it may be the primary factor influencing the process of identity construction. But this may be less true in Japan, where cross-cultural research suggests that self-esteem is a much less powerful source of motivation (cf. Heine, 1996; Heine & Lehman, 1997; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997).

The data for the present study were collected entirely within the culture of Sri Lanka, however, and so no direct cross-cultural comparisons are actually possible. Nevertheless, findings from the vast body of literature on identity research in North America and Europe do provide a benchmark against which the results of this study can and should be gauged.

Organization of the Paper

The paper is organized into six chapters. Chapter 2 provides a brief introduction to some salient historical aspects of the 11 social categories that are the focus of the present study. This introduction is provided for readers unfamiliar with the sociocultural and political situation of South Asia and specifically Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan culture is similar in many ways to that of India, but there are important differences, as will be seen.

Chapter 3 describes the theoretical orientation of the study. As Deaux (1991), a social psychologist, observed, "'Identity' is an intellectually seductive concept, capable of drawing on a number of diverse literatures" (p. 77). Because the concept extends across so many divergent disciplinary approaches – anthropology, sociology, social psychology, and personality psychology, to name a few – it is necessary to specify clearly

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the theoretical framework within which the concept will be employed in the present study. As detailed in this chapter. the approach adopted in this study uses the concept in a primarily psychological sense. but it incorporates sociological themes as well. Chapter 4 delineates the methods used to collect and analyze the data. and Chapter 5 reports the results. Finally. in Chapter 6 the results are discussed with reference to the study's three broad objectives.

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CHAPTER 2

THE IDENTITIES

The 11 social categories with which this study is concerned – nation, race, gender, town/region, religion, caste, class, political party, occupation, educational level, and age – are, with the exception of caste, common to virtually all modern nation-states. To a certain extent, also, the content and social structural organization of these categories is culturally universal. In many cases, however, important aspects of these social categories and the identities associated with them have a history that is uniquely Sri Lankan, and thus a summary historical outline of each will provide some useful context for the analysis.

Due to considerations of space, the following review is necessarily far from exhaustive. Attempted here, rather, is a brief chronology of the historical moments in the evolution of these 11 collective identities that are most likely to be relevant to their psychological representation on the modern scene, emphasizing in particular those moments that are unique to the Sri Lankan situation. Because the present study focuses exclusively on the Sinhalese (see Chapter 4 for a rationale for this analytic strategy), these identities will be discussed from the perspective of this racial group.

Nation, Race, and Religion

As with many former colonies, the genesis of the modern Sri Lankan nation-state can conveniently be set at the achievement of independence from the colonial government, in this case from the British in 1948. In truth, anti-colonial feeling leading

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up to that time did provide a significant foundation for the growth of a modern Sri Lankan (then "Ceylonese") nationalism, so this arbitrary birthdate does have some validity.

However, as political events since that date have made all too clear, the roots of a Sri Lankan nationalism reach much further back into history, where consciousness of national identity was closely interwoven with that of racial and religious identities (cf. Jayawardene, 1984). The current civil war which has claimed over 50,000 military and civilian lives over the last 15 years – between a Tamil, primarily Hindu minority seeking a separate state (*Eelam*) in the north and east of the island, and a Sinhalese, primarily Buddhist majority struggling to keep the island under one rule – may be viewed as a modern manifestation of the historical alignment of these three sources of social identity.

Before proceeding further with a discussion of national identity, it is necessary to provide a definition of "nation" as the social group to which "national identity" implies some sense of attachment. There are many different definitions of the nation-state in current usage in social science (for discussions of Sri Lankan nationalism, see Bechert, 1974; K.M. de Silva, 1973; Geiger, 1960; Jayawardena, 1985; Kemper, 1991; Roberts, 1979; Wickremeratne, 1995a, 1995b). Without becoming embroiled in the debates that distinguish the various models, the following definition of the nation is adopted here: "nation" refers to a geographically bounded collectivity subsuming extant racial, religious, or other sub-cultural collectivities within its borders, governed by a single political system, whose members hold in common a conscious awareness of their membership in that collectivity.

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By this definition, the concept of the nation has been intertwined with racial and religious identities right from the very beginnings of Sinhalese civilization. Their interdependence is made explicit in the *Mahavamsa*, the semi-mythical chronicle which recounts the origins of the Sinhalese race in the immigration from North India, the concurrent arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, and the subsequent flowering of both in the feudal civilization at Anuradhapura from about the fifth century BC to the eighth century AC. The *Mahavamsa*, while of debatable historical accuracy, is an important source of oral and literary tradition for the Sinhalese, perhaps most in its designation of the island of Sri Lanka as *Dhammadipa*, meaning the land where the Buddha's doctrine (the *Dhamma*) was destined to be established and preserved, and *Sihadipa*, meaning the land of the Sinhalese race.

Actually the *Mahavamsa* records that the Buddha himself foretold that Sri Lanka was *Dhammadipa*, "a place where his doctrine should shine in glory" (Chap. I.20). As for *Sihadipa*, the *Mahavamsa* symbolically synchronizes the Buddha's death and passing into Nirvana with the landing of the North Indian Prince Vijaya and his followers in Sri Lanka, the first Sinhalese people, who subdued the native inhabitants of the island to establish a kingdom there (Chap. VI). Throughout the *Mahavamsa*, the state is portrayed as the defender and preserver of both *Dhammadipa* and *Sihadipa* against invading armies of south Indian Tamils.

Several factors have intervened since the Anuradhapura period to keep the ancient *Dhammadipa* and *Sihadipa* concepts alive and well in Sinhalese consciousness up to the present day. Some of the most important factors have been geopolitical. First, Sri Lanka

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is a compact little island, whose perimeter provides a natural boundary for these concepts. Second, the Sinhalese race and language exists nowhere else in the world, and in terms of religion, Sri Lanka is still viewed by the modern Buddhist world as the nation where the orthodox version of the religion known as *Theravada* is best preserved. In contrast, although Sri Lankan Tamils view themselves as racially distinct from Indian Tamils, the Tamil race properly exists both in Sri Lanka as well as in a large and populous state in nearby south India. In addition, the religion of most Sri Lankan Tamils, Hinduism, is also that of the majority in India. These two geographic realities – the geographic integrity of a Sinhalese Buddhist island nation and the proximity of a historically hostile Tamil Hindu civilization just 19 miles off the northwest coast of the island – continue to reinforce the concepts of *Dhammadipa* and *Sihadipa* in the Sinhalese consciousness to this day (Roberts 1979).

Third, periodic invasions of the island by Tamil kingdoms from south India, and their subsequent repulsion by the Sinhalese armies must have reinforced these two notions in the Sinhalese consciousness throughout history. The archetype of this pattern is the most celebrated story in the *Mahavamsa*, that of prince *Dutugämunu* who destroyed the Tamil king *Elara* and his armies to recapture the throne at Anuradhapura in the 2nd century BC. Not only were *Dutugämunu* and his armies Sinhalese, but a company of 500 (Sinhala) Buddhist monks marched with them. The *Mahavamsa* mentions that *Dutugämunu*, "had a relic [a sacred piece of the Buddha's remains or possessions] put into his spear" (Chap. XXV.1), a symbolic gesture which unambiguously indicates that this epic battle was to be fought not only in the name of *Sihadipa*, but in the name of

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Dhammadipa as well. Importantly, the war between *Dutugämunu* and *Elara* is still recreated today in dramatic paintings and sculptures in modern Buddhist temples, and is referenced in modern political discourses (Kemper, 1991). Even towards the modern era, Indian interventions in the post-colonial affairs of the island have served to remind Sinhalese Buddhists that, in their region of the globe, they constitute a small and politically weak minority.

Fourth, Sri Lanka underwent an unusually long period of colonial rule, at the hands of three separate Western powers: the Portuguese from 1505 to 1658, the Dutch from 1658 to 1796, and finally the British from 1796 to 1948. This had at least two major consequences for Sri Lankan national identity in the modern era. First, it served to socialize a numerically small, but politically influential elite into new (western) political orientations and ways of thinking. It has often been observed that the anti-colonial rhetoric of early twentieth century Sinhalese nationalists in fact borrowed heavily from the introduced, western concepts of democracy and the nation-state. Second, the denigration of Sinhalese culture under that of the colonial powers and the exclusion of the Sinhalese from meaningful participation in the colonial government fueled a collective sense of resentment and relative deprivation (Roberts, 1979; Wickremeratne, 1995b).

These two social forces – a nationalistic political elite and a dispossessed Sinhalese majority – converged in the democratic election of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike in 1956. The election was celebrated at the time as a "populist" victory, as the first in which the governing elite broke out of the colonial mold and moved towards an indigenous system of representation engaging the majority of the country's voters. Historical

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hindsight, however, correctly casts the election in a somewhat less favorable light, as a victory for narrow-minded communal politics over the ideals of accommodation and multiculturalism (Sivanandan, 1984).

It was the first time the concept of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism (as opposed to Sri Lankan nationalism) was used to fire the imaginations of a dispossessed Sinhalese majority dreaming of a glorious past. In the words of one scholar, it represented the beginning of an irreversible trend toward, "a capture of the nation-state concept (as well as the state itself) by the *Sihadipa* and *Dhammadipa* concepts" (Roberts, 1979, p. 22). Subsequent politicians, left with no single issue or concept as capable of mobilizing voters or producing such massive electoral majorities, have used them repeatedly, albeit in veiled language. The major theme of Sri Lankan political history since that time is that of communal politics (Sinhala Buddhist nationalism and Tamil separatism) gradually eroding the possibility of a multicultural state.

This brief review has highlighted the extent to which national, racial, and religious identities are intertwined in the Sri Lankan setting. However, they are also distinct from one another to a great extent, both subjectively in terms of their psychological representation as identities, and objectively in terms of the real social groups to which they refer. Roughly seventy percent of Sri Lanka's population is both Sinhalese and Buddhist, but this leaves a sizable 30% that are not, for whom national, racial and religious identities do not so easily reinforce one another. Sinhalese Christians, for instance, are a small minority (about 5% of the total Sri Lankan population), but represent an interesting group in this category: converted to the religion of the colonial rulers from

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their "native" Buddhism, members of this group tended to become more westernized, and many enjoyed real economic advantages because of their greater affinity with the culture of the colonial government. In addition, even within the 70% majority who are both Sinhalese and Buddhist, the power of political cleavages such as class, region, and caste which run counter the unifying concepts of *Dhammadipa* and *Sihadipa* should not be underestimated (cf. Jiggins, 1979; Jupp, 1978; Perera, 1985; Spencer, 1990; Wickremeratne, 1995a, 1995b).

To recapitulate, then, although national, racial, and religious identities are deeply intertwined for the Sinhalese, who are the focus of the present study, they are far from isomorphic. When viewed in isolation, the most important historical features of each of these identities are as follows. For national identity, the assertion of anti-colonial autonomy, and the subsequent "capture" of national identity by the *Dhammadipa* and *Sihadipa* concepts is perhaps most central. For racial identity, the Sinhalese are most conscious of the fact that their racial group exists nowhere else but on this small island and that, due to the terrorist activity of Tamil extremists, they are compelled to occupy an increasingly smaller portion of it. Finally, for religious identity, Sinhalese Buddhists are most conscious of the fact the modern Buddhist world looks to Sri Lanka as the country where orthodox *Theravada* Buddhism has been preserved in its most "pristine" form, while Sinhalese Christians are most conscious of the minority status of their religion among the Sinhalese, and of its association with the culture of the former colonial rulers.

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Caste

The first Sinhalese migrated from north India around the 5th or 6th century BC, and most scholars of this period agree that they brought the Indian institution of caste with them. The subsequent evolution of the caste system among the Sinhalese was distinctive, however, so that the Sinhalese caste system of today differs sharply from that which currently exists on the Indian subcontinent. The most obvious difference is that the Sinhalese system is less central to the social structure, less rigid, and generally milder than its Hindu Indian counterpart (K. M. de Silva, 1992; Sharma, 1988). The Sinhalese system also has few intra-caste gradations or "sub-castes" and formal caste associations,[7] both of which proliferate in the Indian system (Jiggins, 1979). Another important difference is that the Sinhalese system, in contrast to the Indian, stands the traditional status pyramid on its head: the highest ranking Sinhalese caste, the *Goyigama* (land-owners and farmers), is by far the largest, constituting well over half of the Sinhalese population.

Perhaps the most striking and puzzling contrast between the Hindu Indian and the Sinhalese caste system is the fact that whereas Hinduism legitimates caste, Buddhism does not. There is no sacred concept in Buddhism analogous to the "pure-impure" dichotomy that structures the Hindu system, and in fact, at several points scripture records the Buddha openly repudiating the institution of caste (Nyrop et al., 1985). Ryan (1953/1993), whose analysis of the Sinhalese caste system remains the most comprehensive work on the subject to date, suggests that the Buddhist concept of *karma* – in this context meaning good actions in this life yielding rebirth at a better position in

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the next, and *vice versa* – served the function of rationalizing, if not legitimating, caste within Sinhalese Buddhism.

Thus, Buddhism did not actively promote caste as a sacred institution, as in Hinduism, but at the same time was not directly antithetical to it. Perhaps because it lacks this religious foundation, the Sinhalese system of caste also lacks an all-encompassing status ranking system akin to the four-fold *varna* system in India (the *varna* system ranks the general categories priests (*Brahmins*), warriors (*Kshatriyas*), artisans (*Vaisyas*), and serfs (*Sudras*) in descending order and represents an idealized, universal framework within which dozens of more specific castes are contained). Caste-based status rankings among the Sinhalese are rather, "intensely local" in character, such that "members of the same caste have different status positions in different localities" (Ryan, 1953/1993, pp. 86-87). Finally, some castes are spread over wide areas, whereas others are concentrated in small regions or even single-caste villages (Jiggins, 1979).

The foregoing list of characteristics that are lacking in the Sinhalese system of caste, in contrast to the more widely-known Hindu Indian version, leaves us with the following definition of Sinhalese caste groups:

> Endogamous, multifamily groups having a particular birth status in the society; all hold prestige positions based upon that status and all exhibit some degree of social distance from others and communalism among themselves. In addition, many are distinguished by the practice or the memory of the practice of services amounting to caste [occupational] monopolies, group symbols, rituals of avoidance in reference to certain other groups, and a conscious recognition among individuals of the fact of their birth into such a social segment. (Ryan, 1953/1993, p. 88)

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In the ancient Sinhalese kingdom, these "services" were to the king and the feudal aristocracy, but for many the feudal occupation was more symbolic than real. In addition, it is a testimony to the flexibility of the Sinhalese system that the king could "ordain appropriate functions" to various castes, and could even degrade the ranking of an entire caste within the system as a form of retribution if he so wished (Pieris, 1956).

When the Portuguese and Dutch arrived, as Ryan (1953/1993) notes, they had no reason to disturb the feudal order based on caste, and in fact saw much value in preserving it: "[The Portuguese's] immediate effect on the feudal and caste system was to solidify rather than to disrupt. They and the Dutch after them were not slow in appreciating the value of a ready-made machinery for exploitation" (p. 50). The highly successful Portuguese and later the Dutch cinnamon industry, for instance, was based on labor provided by strengthening and expanding an already existing caste group, the *Salagama* or cinnamon-peelers.

The British were more antagonistic towards the institution of caste, for social and ethical reasons, but after a few attempts to modify the system, abandoned any further attempts at reform in the name of preserving social order. Unable to persuade existing caste groups to work their vast coffee and tea plantations, for example, they finally had to "import" Tamil laborers from south India to do the work.

More than any deliberate attempts at reform, the changing structure of economic opportunities since the beginning of colonial rule have had the most profound effect on the structure of the caste system (cf. Gamburd, 1975; Perera, 1985; Singer, 1966). On the one hand, the caste system discouraged the highest ranking *Goyigama* from participating

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in the lower prestige, but highly lucrative new commercial industries which included carpentry, liquor-distilling, trading, and plantation agriculture. Second, some key lower caste groups, particularly the *Karava* (fishermen), the *Durava* (tappers of coconut flower sap, or "toddy"), and the *Salagama* (cinnamon peelers), were concentrated in the "low-country" areas most heavily colonized by the Portuguese and the Dutch, where labor for these new occupations was most in demand. Unlike the *Goyigama*, there were no strict normative restrictions on engaging in these occupations for these caste groups (Roberts, 1995; Ryan, 1953/1993).

The result is that the economic (class) position of various caste groups today bears little correspondence to their ranking in the traditional caste hierarchy. At the national level, although many *Goyigama* have now entered non-agricultural occupations, *Karava* and *Salagama* castes command extensive economic resources far out of proportion to their numerical size (Jiggins, 1979; Sharma, 1988; Roberts, 1995). At the village level, ethnographic work records numerous modern instances in which the economic well-being and local prestige of the *Goyigama* was compromised by their traditional attachment to the land as cultivators (Perera, 1985; Roberts, 1995; Ryan, 1953/1993). Perhaps above all, their restricted spatial mobility as farmers attached to the land placed the *Goyigama* at a disadvantage just when the more mobile, lower castes were exploiting the new political and economic sources of wealth and prestige at the regional and national level.

In this context of widespread status inconsistency, the vertically stratified aspect of the caste system has withered considerably, but the horizontal solidarity or "group-ness" of caste has remained intact, in the form of voting and political representation (cf.

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Jayanntha, 1992; Jiggins, 1979; Nyrop et al., 1985), endogamous marriage practices, employment discrimination, geographic distribution, and vestigial rituals of social avoidance in more conservative areas of the country (Gunasekera, 1994). As Ryan notes (1953/1993), "vertical social distance has been reduced vastly more than has social distance in the sense of communal separateness" (p. 264). Caste as a determinant of prestige, then, has been largely supplanted by economic, occupational, and educational identities, but this "shifting ideology of status can best be described as a conventionalized disapproval of caste inequity, rather than repudiation of caste per se" (Ryan, 1953/1993, p. 341).

Class, Education, and Occupation

These three social identities are all indicators of social status, and for the most part they are constituted in Sri Lanka just as they are in other nation-states. The following review, therefore, will restrict itself to a discussion of the features of these social identities that are peculiar to the Sri Lankan social environment.

Social class before the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505 was more or less determined by one's caste-based occupation. As noted above, after that time new and more lucrative occupations that were not included in the traditional caste hierarchy made their appearance, and as members of various caste groups took advantage of these, class began to assume the characteristics of an independent dimension of social status. Sri Lanka is a very poor country (1995 GNP per capita US$690) which exhibits a very sharply positively skewed income distribution. There is a very small, wealthy, urban, generally English-speaking elite at the top, a numerically insignificant middle class, and a

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very large, poor, vernacular-speaking working class, constituting the majority of the population.

Spatially, communities are not highly segregated by class. In urban Colombo, for example, slums and wealthy neighborhoods exist side by side in patchwork pattern. Socially, however, the rich and poor comprise separate social worlds, whose only significant point of contact is in the employer-employee or master-servant relationship. Although it would probably be incorrect to refer to class groupings in Sri Lanka as cohesive social units, at the same time most Sinhalese do identify with a particular social class stratum, a tendency that is reinforced by the rhetoric of communist, socialist, and even mainstream political parties.

Occupation and educational level are somewhat less important than social class as a basis for collective behavior, but they are considerably more important as determinants of one's overall social status. This fact becomes apparent in situations where occupational status or educational levels do not coincide with high incomes. Occupations in agriculture, for instance, still carry a traditional prestige that has little to do with income, especially among the more than 70% of the country's population that lives in rural areas.

Conversely, occupations in business, though highly lucrative, carry a traditional stigma which again is more pronounced among the rural populace. It is often noted that in the traditional Sinhalese social structure, making a profit in "*bisnis*" was tantamount to tricking or stealing from one's neighbor, and so money-lending and trading were not socially valued activities. This is demonstrated by the fact that these functions were

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usually performed by individuals who came from outside the local village social structure: often these were Muslim traders. As a result, many of the wealthiest families in Sri Lanka today do not hail from the highest echelons of the traditional social structure, simply because the traditional elite considered these and other lucrative occupations demeaning.

Wage labor also has always carried a similar stigma in the traditional Sinhalese social structure: the stigma was strong enough to compel the British to "import" wage laborers from South India, much to their chagrin, to work Sri Lanka's vast coffee and tea plantations. K. M. De Silva (1981), in his seminal historical account of the island, cites one British administrator as observing that the typical Sinhalese

> ...has such a reverence for his patrimonial lands, that were his gain to be quadrupled, he would not abandon their culture....Besides, working for hire is repulsive to their national feelings and is looked upon as almost slavery. The idea of being obliged to obey orders and to do just what they are commanded is galling to them. (pp. 273-274)

This situation is changing, however, particularly in the urban center of Colombo, as more lucrative, white-collar positions become available.

Although the stigma on lucrative employment in *bisnis* is fading in Colombo, the highest status occupation as far most of the island's population is concerned is still government service. This is in large part a legacy of Sri Lanka's pre-colonial, feudal political structure, where occupations closer to the throne were accorded the highest prestige. As the colonial powers gradually solidified their hold over the island, they came to assume to the role of the monarch in the Sinhalese mindset. In particular this was the

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classic British strategy of colonial rule. The situation is certainly complicated, but one indisputable result was the continued, perhaps even heightened prestige accorded to occupations in government, irrespective of the degree of wealth or actual power associated with them.

In truth, the whole formal educational system was and for the most part still is geared toward producing liberally educated civil servants. After Independence in 1948, the tremendous expansion of the public sector fueled the desire for careers in government service still further. Even after considerable expansion of white-collar, lucrative employment in the private sector in recent years, a government job continues to carry with it a social prestige out of all proportion to income or actual power.

The prestige of having an education is also considerable. For someone living in a rural village setting, coming from a poor agricultural family, the mere fact of getting admitted to university brings untold prestige, both to the student and to his or her family. Great things are to be expected from such an individual, to be specific a career in the public sector. Lesser accomplishments, such as passing one's advanced-level exams (roughly equivalent to a high school education in the US) are also a significant source of pride. By the same token, not having an education commensurate with one's other indicators of social status is also important, for the stigma of being (relatively) "uneducated" is one that outward, material success does not conceal.[8]

Political Party

Sri Lanka's political development since Independence has been closely observed by social scientists interested in the country's experience as a multiparty democracy in a

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small developing country with a linguistically and ethnically heterogeneous population. The result of this attention has been a voluminous literature on the subject. For the present purposes, we will review only those elements of the political scene that are most likely to impact the salience of political identity at the individual level.

As was noted in Chapter 1, the average Sri Lankan citizen exhibits an exceptionally high level of political awareness and involvement. Economic developments have diminished the capacity for villages to remain self-sufficient; they too have had to become increasingly integrated into the national political system. High levels of literacy, the existence of an independent media and a well-developed infrastructure for mass communication through print, radio, and television all ensure that even those in more remote locales stay in touch with political developments in the capital.

Social cleavages that are relevant to political alignments are those of race, class, and, more subtly, caste. With the exception of some independent parties and perhaps the Marxist-oriented parties, for instance, it would be fair to say that political party membership provides an important outlet for the expression of Sinhalese racial identity. The electoral competition to transform the strength of racial identity into votes has been particularly intense over the last several years, due to the civil war. At the moment the main opposition party, the United National Party (UNP), has been capitalizing on the ruling party's attempt to resolve the ethnic crisis through political accommodation by criticizing it as a compromise of the rights of the Sinhalese majority, with moderate success. Class alignments with political parties, on the other hand, are strong but somewhat more variable, depending on what each political party promises from year to

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year and is perceived to be able to bring into reality. Finally, as for caste, Jiggins (1979) used national level data to compare the caste of successful candidates to that of their constituencies and found a remarkable degree of correspondence between the two (see also Jayanntha, 1992, who argues that this pattern emerges only because caste delineates the boundaries of personalistic networks of patronage). These three political cleavages – race, class and caste – all fuel the salience of political identity among the Sinhalese, as Spencer (1990), working at the village level, observed: "All manner of rifts and disputes may become expressed as political differences; class could, in some cases, certainly be a factor, but so could caste, religious community, family disagreements, minor economic rivalries, and bad blood of all kinds." (p. 226)

The most important determinants of political party identifications, however, are the networks of patronage that have flourished in the years since Independence. By all accounts, the patron-client relationship has become the basic structural unit of the political system at all levels of the social structure and in all geographic regions (Jayanntha, 1992), from the lowliest *grama-sevaka* ("village servant") all the way up to the highest echelons of power.

> Political power is emerging as the most important factor which determines the rank of groups and individuals...[it] often cuts across the main lines of group divisions in the village. Thus individuals of different primordial groups come together to make *ad hoc* political groups around one individual who possesses the political power. (Perera, 1985, p. 135)

Those outside the patron-client hierarchy have understandably become increasingly disenchanted with the integrity and performance of their elected representatives and with

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the political system as a whole. Anecdotally, a commonly used Sinhala phrase among Sri Lanka's more self-reliant citizens translates to, "I don't go behind politicians."

In particular, at the village level, ethnographers have observed the degree to which political party identifications have all but superseded other forms of stratification within the local social structure (Perera, 1985). For those living in rural areas, political party connections represent an efficient route to power and prestige, particularly for the small-scale cultivator: the resources trickling downwards from the State through provincial and rural organizations can be vast compared to those growing upwards from the soil. Gunasekera (1994) adds that the politically powerful in rural areas are particularly well-placed to exploit this system of patronage:

> The requirements of party building in 'developing democracies' have the effect of enormously extending the scope and intensity of patronage politics – a side effect of the democratic process no doubt unanticipated by its more idealistic proponents....Competitive electoral politics in [rural] Sri Lanka operates in the absence of autonomous provincial institutions capable of constraining the activities of the rural MP's propensity to distribute state benefits, not according to recognized policy criteria, but as a device for building party support. (pp. 171, 176)

Thus a political identity is as likely to be founded on a personalistic connection to a powerful patron as it is to derive from broad social cleavages or one's attitude with respect to policy issues, particularly in rural areas.

Gender

From the perspective of identity theory, gender is a social category, and gender identity refers to the degree of identification with that category at the individual level

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(Deaux & Major, 1987; Frable, 1997). Although it would be incorrect to state that the average Sri Lankan has a consciousness of belonging to a social group defined by gender, the sense of identification with gender as a social category is nonetheless very strong.

The content of gender identity is determined most powerfully by roles within the family unit. From a young age female children are socialized into their adult roles as wives, homemakers, and mothers, and boys into their adult role as husbands, fathers, and breadwinners. These gender-based roles are deeply ingrained in Sri Lanka, so much so that alternatives to this arrangement tend to be viewed as "unnatural." (Risseeuw, 1991). Women with successful careers are not uncommon, and are accepted within their work role, but they are generally not considered to be "ideal wives," except perhaps in the more westernized urban centers.

Much of the research on the topic of gender in Sri Lanka has focused on the changes in woman's roles from the beginning of colonial rule to the present. Historically it is often argued that women had considerably more social power and influence before the period of colonial rule began in 1505 (e.g., Boserup, 1970). Sexual laxity, premarital sexual relations, frequent "divorce," polyandry, and polygamy were all common prior to colonial rule (Metthananda, 1990; Pieris, 1956), and it is thought that all of these practices enhanced women's social power. Women also had broader land rights. *Binna* (matrilocal) marriages, as opposed to *diga* (patrilocal) marriages were far more common than they gradually became under colonial rule. With the arrival of the colonial rulers, the number of monogamous marriages increased and finally became law under the

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British. land rights for women were gradually eroded in part due to increasing land pressure. and occupational opportunities for women were curtailed.

At the same time. women in Sri Lanka have experienced a degree of parity with men that is atypical of the South Asian region in terms of educational opportunity (1990 male literacy 93%. female literacy 84%) and occupational opportunity. Several scholars have highlighted the moderating influence of Buddhism in both historical and modern analyses of gender identity among the Sinhalese. *Theravada* Buddhist philosophy does argue that being born male is more desirable than rebirth as a female: *Theravada* scripture records the Buddha's statement that women cannot achieve enlightenment (the highest religious state in Buddhism that is the goal of all religious practice) in this life as a *bhikkuni* (Buddhist nun), but must first undergo rebirth as a man. The scriptures also tend generally to cast women in lay life as dangerous distractions to the religious seeker. Overall, however, and particularly in comparison to Hindu doctrine. Buddhism is remarkably indifferent to the question of sex roles and gender identity (Kiribamune & Samarasinghe. 1990). This comparison to gender roles in Brahminical Hinduism (see Devendra. 1985; Dhruvarajan, 1989; Guzder & Krishna. 1991; Jacobson & Wadley. 1977; Nandy, 1976; Srinavas, 1977) is instructive because *Theravada* Buddhism first evolved within the Hindu Indian world-view. This fact renders the relative historical indifference to gender roles in Buddhist doctrine is all the more striking.

Females have consistently equaled or exceeded males in terms of enrollments in the state-run University system. As for participation in politics (women obtained the right to vote in 1931), the world's first female head of state was Sri Lanka's Sirimavo

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Bandaranaike in 1960, and the current head of state is her daughter, Chandrika Kumaratunga. Nevertheless, the ideal of the domestic role for women remained unscathed by this experience, as Mrs. Bandaranaike herself stated in one of her earlier speeches.

> Women have a very great responsibility in strengthening world peace and ushering its prosperity. One way of achieving this is through the performance of the onerous and vast responsible duty of caring for their families and bringing up their children to be good citizens and by guiding the future generations in the proper path and inculcating correct ways of thinking in them, thus paving the way, not only for personal and social upliftment but also for the general upliftment of all humanity....It is my firm belief that we should make it a point not to forget the very important place women are occupying in family life and in bringing up their children properly. (cited in Kamalawathie, 1990, p. 93)

Because gender roles thus powerfully determine so much of what is consensually regarded by both men and women to be proper or expected behavior in such a wide range of situations, we can expect that gender identity will comprise an important dimension of social identity in this context.

Age

Although age classifications in Sri Lanka also do not qualify as well-defined social groups, there have been dramatic sociopolitical changes over the last 50 years that have created marked "generation gaps" which should, in theory, encourage strong identification with one's own age group. The cohort now holding some of the most elite positions in business and government reached maturity soon after Independence, when Sri Lanka was a very different country than it is now. Sri Lanka's economy was singled out

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at that time by international observers as one that would develop rapidly, an example for the rest of the region to follow.

That proved not to be the case, as from 1956 to 1977 Sri Lanka went through a series of four radical and counter-productive changes of government in which each administration systematically tried to undo the work of the previous regime. The ethnic situation in the country was mishandled, government officials were corrupt, and the economy suffered badly. This decline has continued: although the economy has improved somewhat with the expansion of the private sector, unemployment remains very high (almost 20%), and many Sri Lankans (those without a place in the patron-client hierarchy) have lost faith in the political system.

The upshot of Sri Lanka's troubled recent history is that youth tends to be correlated with a rejection of the values of older generations to an extraordinary degree. "Disillusionment" of youth – in part the product of a free university system in a country with very limited employment prospects for university graduates – is blamed for fueling two Marxist-oriented insurgencies in 1971 and 1988-90, the second of which nearly toppled the government.

Moreover, the social changes that have accompanied economic development – consumerism, expanded education, longer life expectancies, more women entering the workforce, faster pace of life, greater exposure to the outside world, and so on – have further intensified generational conflict. We may expect, then, that since one's age is probably an accurate indicator of one's attitudes toward a whole range of issues in this rapidly changing context, it should contribute in no small way to one's definition of

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oneself. The fact that Sinhala kinship terms indicate relative age (which are used with non-kin neighbors and friends, as well) further attests to the importance of age rank in the Sinhalese social consciousness.

Town or Village

For its size, Sri Lanka easily ranks among the most geographically and culturally diverse nations in the world. In its population of about 18 million are five major racial groups, three of which number over one million persons (Sinhalese, Tamil, Moor), as well as four major religious groups, all with more than a million members (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity). Geographically, the small island (about the size of the US state of West Virginia) may be divided into three sharply different climatic zones: a hot, coastal "wet zone" including a substantial area of tropical rainforest, a cool, moist, central mountainous region (the "tea country"), and a large semi-arid plain in the rain shadow of the central hills, comprising the so called "dry zone" in the northern and eastern portions of the island.

Because of this cultural and geographic diversity, one's town or village of residence provides a fairly direct indicator of one's way of life, and in this respect assumes importance as a social identity. In addition, to some extent a village identity may refer to membership in a cohesive social unit though, due to large internal migrations to the urban centers and government re-settlement schemes to massive dry zone irrigation projects, this is less and less true (Öhrling, 1977). The following review will restrict itself to a brief review of some salient aspects of those communities in which the present research was conducted. Figure 1 presents a map of the country showing the various

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locations where respondents were sampled, superimposed on the population distribution from the most recent (1981) census (Department of Census and Statistics, 1986).

The Kandyan highlands. Respondents completed questionnaires in and around Kandy, Gampola, and Matale in this region. Kandy is by far the largest city in this region, and it is historically important because it was the last capital of the Sinhalese kingdom. As noted earlier, the first capital of the Sinhalese kingdom was at Anuradhapura from the fifth century BC to the eighth century AC. From that point on, however, it was compelled to move south and into the central highlands and finally to Kandy in 1590, which provided natural protection against invading Tamil armies from south India. Later, after 1505, the kingdom's location at Kandy was critical because the hills in this region afforded a natural barrier against the naval colonial powers whose base of power was in the coastal areas. The Portuguese (ruled from 1505-1658) and Dutch (1658-1796) managed to subdue all of the island except the kingdom at Kandy, which finally fell to the British (1796-1947) as late as 1815.

The Kandyan kingdom's historical role as the last outpost of traditional Sinhalese nationalism is important because it still lingers in the collective consciousness of the Sinhalese. In fact, just after the turn of the century, there was a powerful movement in the highlands to declare what was the former Kandyan kingdom a separate nation, which nearly succeeded. Modern Sinhalese still refer to themselves as either "up-country" (Kandyan) or "low country," where up-country is generally considered more "traditional" or "pure" Sinhalese. It is in fact true that the culture of the low-country Sinhalese has

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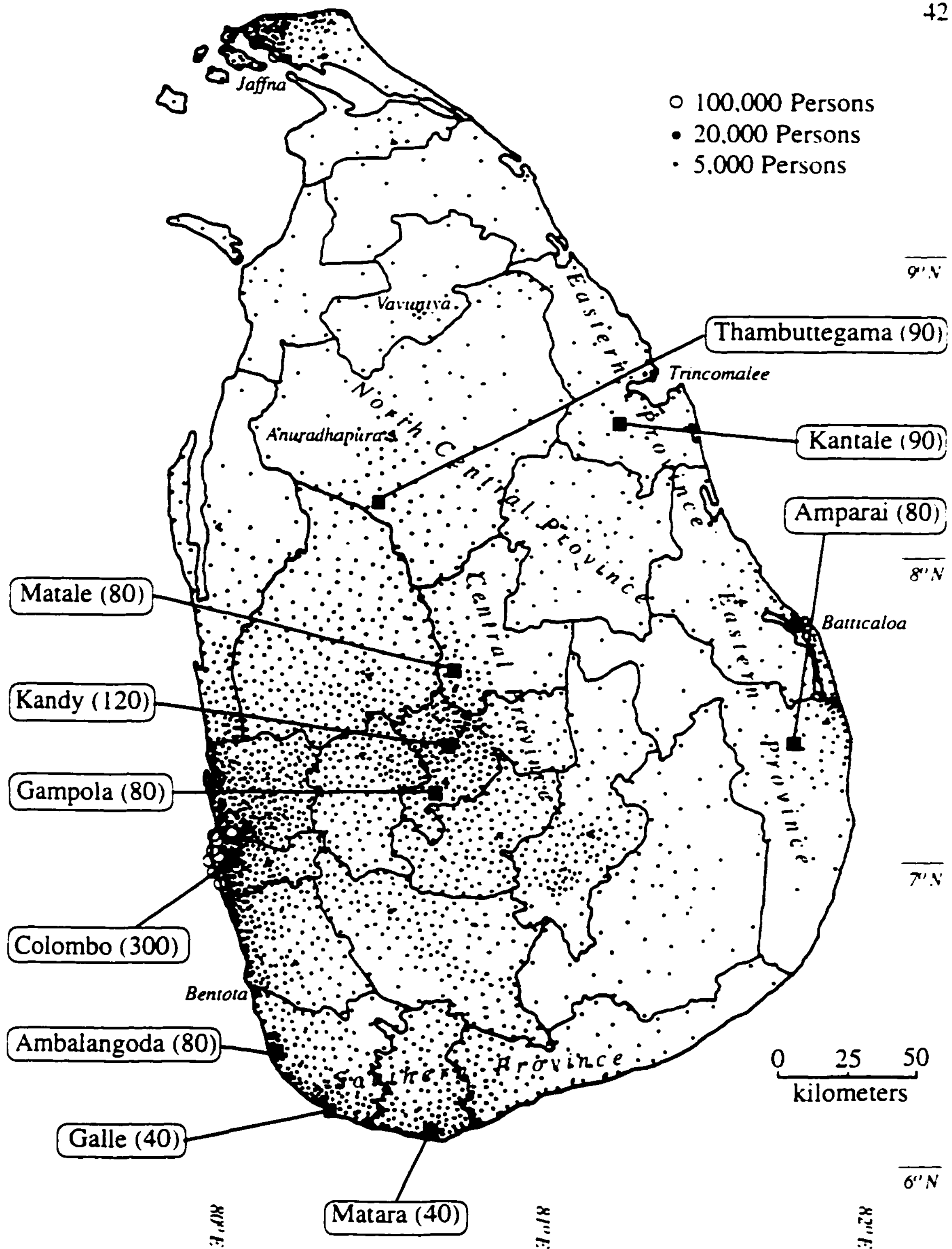

Figure 1. Locations of Questionnaire Distribution, Superimposed on Latest (1981) Map of Population Distribution. Target sample sizes in parentheses; obtained sample sizes are discussed in the text.

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been far more influenced by that of the western colonial powers: whereas the Kandyan kingdom resisted the western colonial incursions until 1815. many of those in the low-country have lived under a colonial government and economic system since the Portuguese arrived almost 500 years ago.

Those who can claim ancestry to up-country Sinhalese or who themselves live in the up-country. then, are understandably often quite proud of the fact. The distinction is reinforced by patterns of dress (the "Kandyan" mode of draping a women's *saree* with a small frill at the waist is an icon of Sinhalese identity. and differs from the more flowing. Indian method used by low-country Sinhalese). physical appearance (Kandyan Sinhalese tend to be slightly fairer and to have lighter eye color as well). and even speech (for instance. the personal pronoun in Sinhala is *mama* in the low-country. and *mang* in the up-country. although both are used and of course understood everywhere). The high status of up-country Sinhalese, though not extremely pronounced. in consensually shared by all Sinhalese.

Deep south. The samples from in and around the towns of Matara and Galle are in the densely populated region known as the "wet zone." Racially, the south is almost 100% Sinhalese, is informally referred to as the "Sinhala heartland," and economically speaking is relatively impoverished. In 1971 and 1988-1990 the south was the epicenter of two major insurgencies organized by a political party known as the People's Liberation Front (*Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna*), fought mainly by ranks of unemployed and disillusioned Sinhalese youth. In the effort to avoid similar rebellions in the future, the

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government is currently implementing plans to invest heavily in the economic development of this region.

Southwest coast. Further up the southwest coast (see Figure 1) is Ambalangoda, from which a sample was obtained. The coastal strip from Colombo to Galle is densely populated, relatively productive economically (the heart of the tourist industry), and quite diverse in terms of caste. It is for this last attribute that Ambalangoda was included in the present sample.

Colombo. Still further up along the coast is Colombo, the largest urban center and commercial capital of the country. The large city is similar to any of its size in a developing country, and is racially and religiously diverse; precisely because it is so large and diffuse, attachment to it for persons living there is probably fairly weak. In fact many migrants to Colombo remain psychologically more attached to their ancestral home and village outside the city than they are to Colombo itself.

Dry zone. Three separate samples were obtained to represent this rural region of the country: Amparai in the southeast, Kantale in the northeast, and Thambuttegama in the northwest. Amparai is the largest town of the three (1981 population 16,213) and Thambuttegama the smallest, although all three are small by national standards. Amparai and Kantale are racially and religiously diverse, located in districts that consist of Sinhalese, Tamils, and Muslims in roughly equal proportion, whereas Thambuttegama is predominantly Sinhalese. A majority of residents in these areas, as is the case in many dry zone communities, are relatively recent migrants, who either settled there independently after government and international programs to eliminate malaria were

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successfully implemented soon after Independence in these areas, or took part in more recent government-sponsored re-colonization and irrigation schemes.

For the purposes of the present study, it is also important to note the location of these three areas with respect to the northern and eastern provinces that are claimed by Tamil separatists as their *Eelam* or homeland. Amparai and Kantale actually fall within this region (the Eastern Province) and Thambuttegama is adjacent to it and to the Wilpattu National Park, a base of terrorist activity. During the years since the war began in 1983, terrorists have conducted intermittent raids on Muslim and Sinhalese villages in these areas, killing civilians and destroying property in reprisals for government army advances. This proximity undoubtedly serves to intensify the debate over racial and religious identity for residents of these areas.

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CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

A Model of the Self-Concept

The concepts of "self" and "self-concept" have always had a central place in the discipline of social psychology, beginning with the work of William James (1890/1981), through that of George Mead (1934), and continuing up to the present day. The consequence of this long-standing interest has been a proliferation of diverse models of the self-concept, which differ from each other in important respects. For example, some theorists represent the self-concept as a unidimensional or global construct, whereas others argue that it subsumes multiple selves, identities, or roles (Deaux, 1992; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1980). Another theme that distinguishes the various models is the degree of stability attributed to self-conceptions across time and situations; some more radical models contend that self-conceptions are constructed anew in each social interaction with essentially no reference to past or future self-conceptions (Gergen, 1977), but most acknowledge varying degrees of cross-situational stability (Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Markus & Kunda, 1986; Serpe, 1987; Swann, 1987; Turner et al. 1994). More extensive reviews of these and other theoretical debates in the self-concept literature are available elsewhere (Gecas, 1982; Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Wylie, 1979).

The model of the self-concept to be employed in the present study is thus necessarily selective. Specifically, the model integrates three current social psychological

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theories of identity and the self-concept. First, and most directly, it borrows from Stryker's (1968, 1980, 1987, 1991, 1994; Strkyer & Serpe, 1982, 1994) identity theory (hereafter referred to as "identity theory"). Second, it incorporates the perspective of social identity theory, as developed in the work of Tajfel (1978, 1981, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and later extended by J.C. Turner and others (Abrams, 1992; Brewer, 1991; Oakes, Turner, & Haslam, 1991; Turner et al., 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994), and finally individualism-collectivism theory, as developed in the work of Harry Triandis and his associates (Triandis, 1989, 1995; Triandis et al., 1988, 1990).

These three theories were developed to address somewhat different questions, and so each has evolved different theoretical emphases. Identity theory, sociological in orientation, focuses on how individuals organize multiple identities within their self-concepts in a hierarchy of salience, and on how this organization of self relates to the organization of society generally. Social identity theory, on the other hand, with a more psychological emphasis, is centrally concerned with the cognitive and motivational processes involved in the subjective representation of group membership, and with how these subjective representations determine and are themselves determined by intergroup behavior. Individualism-collectivism theory, also psychological in orientation, examines the relationship between personal identity and social identities within the self-concept.

Because these three theories share some basic assumptions, however, they can be integrated within a single model of the self-concept. In fact, when the shared ideological foundation of these three theories is made explicit in such an integrative model, their

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divergent emphases complement each other rather well. This integrative model is described below.

Some Definitions

Three basic concepts comprise the framework for this model: social identity, personal identity, and the self-concept. The self-concept is a cognitive construct, and is defined simply as the total image or perception an individual has regarding who he or she is. In other words, the self-concept subsumes the answers a person might give to the question "who am I?" (Kuhn & McPartland, 1954).

As for the term social identity, Tajfel's broad definition is adopted here: social identities are "those aspects of the self-concept which derive from his [sic] knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 255). Social identity, then, comprises one kind of answer to the question "who am I?" that is based on membership in a social group or category – I am a man (gender category), I am an American (nation), I am a bus driver (occupation), and so on, together with their evaluative and affective connotations.

Personal identity, on other hand, is that part of the self-concept that differentiates the self from others. Personal identity represents a different category of answers to the question "who am I," one that refers to traits, abilities, preferences, or feelings – I am an honest person, I am a happy person, and so on.

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The Self-Concept is Multidimensional

Despite the fact that the self is subjectively experienced as unified and coherent (Taylor & Dubé, 1986; Wong-Reiger & Taylor, 1981), from a social psychological perspective it is more useful to depict the self-concept as a collection of multiple identities that are conceptually and empirically distinct (Deaux, 1991, 1995; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Rosenberg, 1988). Individuals are always members of multiple social groups and categories, and so their overall subjective sense of "who they are" (the self-concept) likewise contains multiple social identities, one for each group membership. Within this conceptualization, individual identities may be examined in isolation (e.g., racial identification), or in terms of their relationships to other identities within the self-concept (e.g., between racial identity and national identity). Importantly, the existence of a "global" or "core" self is nowhere posited in the model. Rather, the self-concept is here described as a superordinate category, a repository of potential self-definitions or identities.

This notion of multiplicity is explicit within identity theory and social identity theory (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Stryker, 1980, 1987; Turner et al., 1987, 1994), and implicit within individualism-collectivism theory in its dichotomization of the self-concept into the "individual," "independent," or "private" self versus the "collective," "interdependent," or "social" self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989; Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991). Many formulations of individualism-collectivism theory also disaggregate the category "collective self," examining specific group memberships, such as family, peers, work-group, and society independently, thus representing multiplicity in

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a manner virtually identical to that of identity theory and social identity theory (Allik & Realo, 1996; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Hui, 1988; Hui & Yee, 1994; Matsumoto, Kudoh, & Takeuchi, 1996; Realo, Allik, & Vadi, 1997; Rhee, Uleman, & Lee, 1996; Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985).

Identities are Created Equal

Another common thread running through these three theories of self-conception is that they make no a priori assumptions about which identities are most central or self-defining. The question of which identities are most important within the self-concept of a particular individual remains, within the present model as well, a purely empirical one. It is assumed from the outset that different individuals will exhibit different identity structures.

This assumption contrasts with that of many models of the self-concept which do accord a structural primacy to a particular identity or category of identities. Most often it is personal identity – that part of the self-concept which serves to differentiate the self from others – that is assumed to play the central or primary role in self-conception. This assumption is explicit in models that depict personal identity as the core of the self-concept, with social identities arrayed around it (for recent examples, see Brewer, 1991; Hsu, 1985; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman & Markus, 1993), or which define self-conception as a member of a social group or category as "deindividuation," "diffusion," or "assimilation," implying a negatively valued "loss" of self into the more inclusive, social identities within the self-concept (Abrams, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1994; Turner et al., 1994).

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The present integrative model of the self-concept does not accord personal identity any such central or special place. As stated by a social identity theorist,

> Personal self-categorizations [i.e., personal identity] are not regarded here as having any privileged status in defining the self. They do not represent the 'true' individual self which in some way invests the other levels with their significance. The self-concept in social psychology is usually equated with the personal self, but it is fundamental to our assumption that this is incorrect. (Turner et al., 1987, p. 46)

Thus self-perceptions as a unique individual (personal identity) are, within the present model, not a priori to be regarded as any more or less imbued with the essential quality of "selfhood" than are self-perceptions deriving from one's membership in social groups (social identity).

Some models also posit invariant structural relationships among social identities within the self concept. For instance, it is often asserted that social identities that derive from concrete attachments to the members of directly known social groups (e.g., extended family, friends, work-group, voluntary associations) are necessarily more important to the self-concept than social identities that derive from membership in groups that overlap with concrete social experience, but properly denote an attachment to larger, abstract categories (e.g., nation, race, gender) or "imagined communities" (for a discussion, see Anderson, 1991; Bornewasser & Bober, 1987; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Greenwood, 1994; Oyserman & Markus, 1993; Prentice, Miller, & Lightdale, 1994; Wong-Regier & Taylor, 1981). Other theorists contend that racial, age, and gender identities, because of their high visibility and social significance, always play a central role in self-definition

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(Brewer & Lui, 1989; Deaux, 1993; Stryker, 1987). Still others have invoked the term "primordial" to denote racial, linguistic, religious, caste, and regional identities, and imply that the political significance of these categories of identity derives from an almost biologically given importance within the self-concept (Obeyesekere, 1979; Oommen, 1986; Roberts, 1979; see also Reynolds, Falger, & Vine, 1987).

Once again, the present model rejects all such theory-driven structural formulations of the self-concept. In certain instances it may be true that particular social identities or categories of social identity are consistently ranked as most important or self-defining by a specific group of people in a specific social environment: gender, class, and race in America (Brewer & Lui, 1989; Stryker, 1987); nation, caste, religion, and language in India (Oommen, 1986; see also Paranjpe, 1970, for an empirical study) are some salient examples. But these local consistencies should not be confused with universal structural laws governing invariant relationships among identities. New combinations are always possible with variation in the individual's social location, or with large-scale changes in the social structure.

Stability of the Self-Concept

The central thesis of this paper is that two components of the subjective self-concept – the assessed importance of individual identities and the relationships among identities – are systematically related to certain features of one's objective social environment within the broader social structure. By implication, then, the degree of stability or variability in the self-concept must be systematically related to the degree of stability or variability in this social environment (cf. Serpe, 1987; Turner et al., 1994).

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The present model assumes that the self-concept exhibits considerable stability, since individuals' social environment are also quite stable.

In this connection it becomes necessary to state more precisely what exactly is meant by the term "social environment." For if it designates the immediate social situation, which changes from moment to moment, then the self-concept should also be viewed as highly variable across situations. It is known that transient contexts momentarily elicit self-conceptions in terms of situationally relevant identities (Markus & Kunda, 1986; McGuire, 1984; McGuire & McGuire, 1988; McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978; Nurius & Markus, 1990; Turner et al., 1994). For example, while at church, one's religious social identity may dominate one's immediate self-image; when one's racial group or gender is the subject of a co-worker's unfavorable generalization, the corresponding identities become powerfully salient; in interactions with close friends, self-conceptions in terms of one's personal identity (in terms of one's unique traits, preferences, and the like) are more likely to predominate, and so on.

However, if social environment implies instead the consistent or recurring aspects of social experience – that is, role performances, enduring social relationships, culturally shared beliefs, symbols, and practices – then a reasonably stable picture of the self-concept emerges (Serpe, 1994; Shibutani, 1961). From this perspective, the self-concept is a collection of potential self-conceptions, a kind of idealized subjective "toolbox" for constructing temporary, situationally appropriate self-images. The contents of the "toolbox" are relatively stable; the temporary self-image, sensitive to the demands of the immediate context, is variable.

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Markus and Kunda (1986) endorse a similar dual approach to analyzing the self-concept, distinguishing between "working" self-conceptions and the "stable" self-concept.

> The [stable] self-concept is more productively viewed as a space, a confederation, or a system of self-conceptions. From this set of self-conceptions, the individual constructs a working self-concept....the working self-concept is a temporary structure, consisting of elements from the collection of self-conceptions, organized in a configuration determined by ongoing social events. The self-concept, then, can be viewed as stable in that the universe of self-conceptions is relatively stable. (pp. 859, 865)

Burke (1980; Burke & Tully, 1977), a sociologist, uses the terms "image" and "identity" to make basically the same distinction between working and stable self-conceptions, respectively. Identities for Burke are an "idealized picture of the self-in-role," which provide the raw material for the "construction of self-images" that are sensitive to the demands of the immediate situation (pp. 20-21). Identities and images are simply different components of the overall process of self-construction (Burke, 1992).

Without denying the real variability of situated or working self-conceptions, the present study focuses on the stable "universe of self-conceptions" or identities that is properly referred to as the self-concept. This stable universe of self-conceptions or identities can be conceived as an idealized subjective representation of the regularities in one's ongoing social experience, as these regularities are associated with specific dimensions of one's objective location in the social structure. Thus a particular identity within the self-concept (e.g., gender identity) is viewed here as emerging from the

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recurrent experiences in one's social environment that are perceived to be associated with the corresponding dimension of one's social location (e.g., one's gender).

For the remainder of this paper, then, the following terminology will be employed to avoid confusion between the dual aspects of the self-concept. "Self-concept" will hereafter refer to the stable universe of potential self-conceptions, and "self-conception" or "identity" will refer to one such self-conception. "Social environment" will refer to the recurrent social experiences that are connected with one's unique social location. "Self-image" or "situated identity," on the other hand, will hereafter designate a self-conception that is temporary and is elicited by a particular social interaction, and "situation" or "context" will refer to just such a transient interaction.

Finally, it is apparent that since self-conceptions are necessarily anchored in one's social environment, they can and do undergo gradual modification with change in that environment. This historical or developmental change in self-conception, deriving from changes in the social environment, is to be distinguished from the changes in self-image which derive from changes in the immediate social situation or context. Two varieties of such long-term change in the social environment can be distinguished. Social mobility refers to change in an individual's social environment that follows from a change in his or her social location. Changes in occupation, relocation of one's residence (Hormuth, 1990), and "passing" as a member of a dominant ethnic group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) are common examples of social mobility. Social change, on the other hand, refers to a change in the broader social structure or culture which alters the structural importance of at least one dimension of an individual's social location. In Sri Lanka, for example,

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urban-industrial development has served to erode the functional importance of traditional identities such as caste, extended family, age, and gender; at the same time, competition among ethnic groups over scarce resources such as university admissions and government employment has been one factor in heightening the importance of racial identity in the country (C.R. de Silva, 1979; Roberts, 1979; Wickremeratne, 1995a, 1995b).

Relationships Between Identities

Social identities. Most identity studies assess categories of social identity one at a time, as if each existed in isolation. Whether this one-dimensional approach to social identity is motivated by theoretical concerns or methodological limitations, social reality is, of course, much more complex. Individuals are always members of multiple social groups, and in any situation, several overlapping and even conflicting social identities are likely to be important to the individual (Deaux, 1991, 1992, 1995; Hewitt, 1991; Weigert, Teitge, & Teitge, 1986; Wong-Rieger & Taylor, 1981).

The models of "crossed categorization," first suggested by Deschamps and Doise (1978; see also Deschamps, 1977), and extensively replicated (Brown & Turner, 1979; Hagerdoorn & Henke, 1991; Hewstone, Islam, & Judd, 1993; Rehm, Lilli, & Van Eimeren, 1988; Vanbeselaere, 1987, 1991), were an attempt to introduce a two-dimensional model of the self-concept within the research paradigm of social identity theory. Whereas the typical social identity study encourages participants to engage in self-perception in terms of a single dimension of social identity, crossed categorization studies encourage two-dimensional self-perceptions (i.e., as a "Caucasian male," rather than simply "male" or "Caucasian"). However, although these studies do go beyond a

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unidimensional representation of the self-concept, they are still limited by practical considerations to two or at most three dimensions, which moreover are constrained a priori by the researcher.

Another, more comprehensive approach to the structure of the self-concept (Deaux, 1992; Reid & Deaux, 1996; Rosenberg, 1988; Rosenberg & Gara, 1985) combines the identities and traits claimed by individuals in their self-definition to construct a hierarchical model of the self-concept. The procedure begins by assessing the identities that are central to an individual's self-definition and then independently assesses the personality traits that person claims in his or her self-definition. Using this information, respondents are then asked to construct an "identities x traits" matrix, which indicates which of their traits they feel are typical of each of their identities. This matrix is interpreted using a form of hierarchical classification analysis, which usually produces a hierarchical "tree" of identities, organized by "prominence" or proximity to the apex of the tree. In short, identities that are associated with many traits in the matrix emerge as hierarchically more prominent, subsuming other identities that contain various subsets of these traits.

In another analogous approach (Burke, 1980; Hoelter, 1983, 1985), researchers select several identities of interest and a number of attributes a priori, and then ask respondents to rate each identity on each attribute (the attributes are represented on semantic differential scales). These ratings are then analyzed using a variety of multivariate techniques to locate all the identities in an *n*-dimensional "semantic space"

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structured by the various attributes. Distances between individual identities or groups of identities can then be calculated.

The strength of these latter two approaches is their comprehensiveness, but their major weakness is that data collection procedures are very repetitive and time-consuming. In addition, although Rosenberg's identities x traits model is flexible and empirically "bottom-up," the approaches of Burke and Hoelter are constrained by the fact that both the identities and the dimensions of the semantic space in which they are located are researcher-defined. Burke and Hoelter both note the importance of selecting appropriate semantic "dimensions arising from the group experience" (Hoelter, 1985, p. 1394), that is, those that are both meaningful to respondents and relevant to the identities. The question, of course, is how to go about doing this.

To address these two issues, the procedure known as nonmetric multidimensional scaling was applied to the structural analysis of the identities in the present study. The method is efficient in terms of data collection (see Chapter 4) and, because it is nonmetric, allows respondents to apply their own dimensions or attributes to assess perceived similarities among identities.

Social identities can be related to one another in a number of ways. They may simply be highly intertwined in the social structure and thus within the self-concepts of individuals living in that social structure. Race and class provide examples in the U.S., whereas in Sri Lanka race is probably most closely aligned with religion, nation, and language in the social structure. Or they may be cognitively grouped according to any number of logical criteria, for instance, ascribed versus achieved identities, identities

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based on large groups versus those based on small groups, economic versus non-economic identities.

In fact some of the most important social dilemmas can be framed as situations where identities are construed by broad sections of society as closely related. Sri Lanka, for instance, presents an extreme example of how a perhaps too cozy relationship between national and racial identity can become problematic in all but the most homogenous modern-nation states. The perception on the part of many majority Sinhalese that "Sri Lankan" and "Sinhalese" are isomorphic categories of social identity is clearly one of the major barriers to resolving the current ethnic conflict; by the same token, Tamil separatists are uncomfortable subsuming their minority racial status under the national identity, "Sri Lankan."

In addition to providing insights into social issues involving specific social identities, a structural analysis of multiple identities within the self-concept is useful because it can reveal the general dimensions along which social identities are structured in a given society. Are they structured primarily along an achieved versus ascribed dimension? A politically contested versus politically neutral dimension? Are any single identities conceived to be hierarchically primary? Such analyses are likely to be particularly revealing in cross-cultural perspective, as different structural principles are probably accorded different degrees of primacy in different societies.

Personal and social identities. The relationship between one's personal and social identities has been most extensively explored in the cross-cultural literature on individualism-collectivism. Individualism, in the language of identity theory, is the

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chronic tendency to categorize the self in terms of personal identity and to de-emphasize one's social identities (Hofstede, 1991; Singelis, 1994; Triandis, 1989; Triandis et al., 1988, 1990), while collectivism, at the opposite extreme, is the chronic tendency to accentuate the importance of one's social identities, and correspondingly to de-emphasize personal identity.

In both social identity theory (Turner et al., 1987, 1994) and in the early formulations of individualism-collectivism theory (Hofstede, 1980; Hui, 1988; Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985) personal and social identities were conceived as functionally antagonistic elements of the self-concept (Trafimow et al., 1991; Triandis, 1989; see also Brown et al., 1992; Hinkle & Brown, 1990). A number of other researchers, however, have argued that individualism and collectivism do not necessarily represent polar opposites on a single psychological dimension (Kagitcibasi, 1987a, 1994; Schwartz, 1990; Sinha & Tripathi, 1994). This latter argument has received some empirical support, for in factor analyses of individualism-collectivism scales the two constructs emerge as orthogonal factors (Freeman, 1996; Rhee, Uleman, & Lee, 1996; Singelis, 1994; Triandis et al., 1986, 1988).

Within the model of the self-concept described here, I propose instead that the relationships between personal and social identities are group-specific (cf. Hui, 1988; Matsumoto, Kudoh, & Takeuchi, 1996). For example, Americans are presumed to be prototypical individualists with strong personal identities and relatively weak social identities. However, several collective identities – race, gender, and occupation, for example – remain quite salient for members of this national group. A strong personal

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identity, therefore, may eclipse some social self-cognitions, be unrelated to others, and reinforce still others. A particularly strong social or collective identity therefore does not necessarily preclude awareness of oneself as a unique individual. Thus I argue that the relationship between personal, social, and collective identities should be assessed on a group-specific basis.

Hypotheses

Theory-based Predictions

The objectives of the present study involve the testing of six specific a priori hypotheses concerning the salience of individual identities within the self-concept, and two exploratory analyses addressing the structure of the self-concept and providing a closer look at racial identity. Table 1 outlines the six specific hypotheses, and the statistical relationships they imply for identities relevant to the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: Self-esteem. The drive to maintain high self-esteem through social comparison (Festinger, 1954) is, in many theories of the self-concept, the primary driving force in the process of self-construction (Abrams, 1992; Hogg & Abrams, 1990; Oakes & Turner, 1980; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Because the self-concept is composed of personal as well as social identities, self-enhancing social comparison processes are engaged at both the intergroup (Brewer & Weber, 1994; Tajfel, 1978) and interpersonal (Festinger, 1954) levels to maintain positive self-esteem.

The simple hypothesis derived from this theory, to be tested in the present study, states that when social comparisons at the intergroup level yield favorable self-evaluations on some category of identity for an individual, then such individuals will

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Table 1. Experimental Hypotheses

Theoretical Hypothesis	Empirical Predictions Based on Hypothesis
1. Self-esteem Hypothesis: *Individuals are motivated to think of themselves as good, capable, and powerful relative to others; therefore, identities on which individuals are highly ranked in society will be particularly emphasized within the self-concept.*	1. Positive linear relationship between class identity salience and social class. 2. Positive linear relationship between occupational identity salience and occupational status. 3. Positive linear relationship between educational identity salience and years of education. 4. Positive linear relationship between caste identity salience and caste ranking. 5. Gender identity more salient for males than females. 6. Town / village identity more salient for up-country (high-status) than low-country (low-status) residents.
2. Distinctiveness Hypothesis: *One will identify with a demographic characteristic to the extent that one is in the minority on it in one's usual social groups.*	1. Religious identity more salient for minority Christians than for (majority) Buddhists. 2a. Political party identity more salient for members of small political parties than for members of large political parties. *-or-* 2b. Political party identity more salient for members of politically distinctive ("radical") parties than for members of politically moderate ("mainstream") parties
3. Social Change Hypothesis: *Identities corresponding to "traditional" dimensions of social status are less salient for those living in urban, industrialized areas; identities corresponding to "modern" dimensions of social status will be more salient for those living in urban, industrialized areas.*	1. Negative linear relationship between caste identity salience and urban-industrial development (UID). 2. Negative linear relationship between town / village identity salience and UID. 3. Negative linear relationship between gender identity salience and UID. 4. Negative linear relationship between age identity salience and UID.

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Table 1. (continued)

Theoretical Hypothesis	Empirical Predictions Based on Hypothesis
3. Social Change Hypothesis: (continued)	5. Positive linear relationship between class identity salience and UID.
	6. Positive linear relationship between occupational identity salience and UID.
	7. Positive linear relationship between educational identity salience and UID.
	8. Negative linear relationship between political identity salience and UID.
4. Status Inconsistency Hypothesis: *When one indicator of social status is inconsistent with the others for an individual, such individuals will: a) strongly emphasize a lone high status identity and, b) strongly de-emphasize a lone low status identity.*	1a. Occupational identity more salient to the extent that occupational status deviates in a positive direction from average status of other identities.
	1b. Occupational identity less salient to the extent that occupational status deviates in a negative direction from average status of other identities.
	2a. Caste identity more salient to the extent that caste status deviates in a positive direction from average status of other identities.
	2b. Caste identity less salient to the extent that caste status deviates in a negative direction from average status of other identities.
	3a. Class identity more salient to the extent that class status deviates in a positive direction from average status of other identities.
	3b. Class identity less salient to the extent that class status deviates in a negative direction from average status of other identities.
	4a. Educational identity more salient to the extent that educational status deviates in a positive direction from average status of other identities.
	4b. Educational identity less salient to the extent that educational status deviates in a negative direction from average status of other identities.

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Table 1. (continued)

Theoretical Hypothesis	Empirical Predictions Based on Hypothesis
5. Individualism Hypothesis: *1) a salient personal identity implies low salience for social identities.*	1a. Salience of personal identity negatively correlated with salience of all social identities.
- or -	
2) a salient personal identity implies salient achieved social identities and low salience for ascribed social identities.	2a. Salience of personal identity positively correlated with salience of achieved identities: occupational, class, educational, and political. 2b. Salience of personal identity negatively correlated with salience of ascribed identities: caste, nation, religion, race, and gender.
6. Contact Hypothesis: *For a given category of identity, impersonal forms of intergroup contact in terms of that identity will be positively associated with the salience of that identity; intimate intergroup contact, however, will be negatively associated with the salience of that identity.*	1. Racial identity more salient in racially diverse locales. 2. Religious identity more salient in religiously diverse locales. 3. Racial intergroup contact within secondary social groups positively associated with salience of racial identity. 4. Religious intergroup contact within secondary social groups positively associated with salience of religious identity. 5. Racial intergroup contact within primary social groups negatively associated with salience of racial identity. 6. Religious intergroup contact on the within primary social groups negatively associated with salience of religious identity.

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emphasize the importance of that identity within their self-concepts. Conversely, when social comparisons yield unfavorable self-evaluations on a dimension of identity, the hypothesis predicts that the importance of that identity to be de-emphasized within the self-concept. Indeed, this hypothesis continues to receive a good deal of empirical support, both in field settings, where group status is determined by the social structure, and in laboratory settings, where the status of a real or artificial group has been engineered by manipulating bogus performance evaluations or group control over valued resources (Brown, 1984; Brown & Wade, 1987; Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993; Ellemers, van Knippenberg, & Wilke, 1990; Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1985, 1987).

Some theorists have criticized the motivational status of self-esteem within social identity theory as "atheoretical" (Schiffmann & Wicklund, 1992; Schiffmann, 1993; see also Farsides, 1993, for a rebuttal) because of its inability to make specific predictions. Hogg and Abrams (1990) noted, "The self-esteem hypothesis itself is often of little help in predicting precisely which strategy or combination of strategies is adopted in a specific socio-historical niche" (p. 39). As far as some identities are concerned, this criticism is well-founded. Why should possessing a American national identity, for instance, be any less of a basis for making self-enhancing social comparisons than possessing a Sri Lankan national identity? There exists no objective standard against which the status (and hence the self-enhancing capacity) of national identities can be measured.

In the case of identities that are ranked according to a status dimension, however, the self-esteem hypothesis can lead to specific predictions. If one's occupational identity

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is that of CEO of a successful company, social comparisons on that dimension of identity will, on average, be far more self-enhancing than if one is a security guard at one of the company's offices. This is because evaluations about what constitutes "good" and "bad" on this dimension of the social structure are more or less shared within a given society. Six of the 11 identities in the present study are ranked on social structural dimensions: class, occupation, educational level, caste, gender, and town of residence. The corresponding hypotheses are spelled out in Table 1. Gender is included in the list because Sri Lanka is a culture in which, due to the persistence of traditional attitudes about this aspect of identity, gender categories are to some extent consensually ranked.

Town of residence is relevant to this hypothesis along a culturally-specific dimension. As noted in Chapter 2, the Sinhalese distinguish themselves regionally as "up-country" (or "*Kandyan*") versus "low-country." The connotations of the former category within the Sinhalese world-view are all positive: resistance to the colonial powers until as recently as 1815, high caste, landholders, "traditional" culture, and light skin tone. Low-country residence, on the other hand, carries more negative connotations: a longer period of subjugation to colonial rule, presence of more mixed caste groups, business and artisan occupations, "westernized" culture, darker skin tone. These distinctions may seem subtle and irrelevant to outsiders, but to the Sinhalese they are far from trivial. Thus the prediction was made that town / village identity would be more salient for those living in up-country areas.

One potential confound in this formulation of the self-esteem hypothesis is the effect of low group status on self esteem. One of the fundamental postulates in Tajfel's

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explication of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) states that when social comparisons at the intergroup level yield unfavorable self-evaluations on some dimension of identity, individuals will engage in a number of self-enhancing cognitive or behavioral strategies. The strategies he noted include (a) de-emphasizing the importance of that aspect of identity relative to other identities; (b) adopting new criteria for comparison which favor a more positive evaluation of that social identity; (c) limiting one's comparative frame of reference; or, (d) attempting to change the content of one's social identity. This fourth strategy might involve "passing" as a member of another social category, actually changing one's individual category membership (both "social mobility" strategies), or changing the social structure which supports the negative group evaluation (a "social change" strategy). Subsequent research has demonstrated that members of both real and artificial (i.e., "minimal") low-status groups in U.S. culture do, in fact, use such strategies to maintain self-esteem (Crocker & Major, 1989; Ellemers & van Rijswijk, 1997; Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993; Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish, & Hodge, 1996; Karasawa, 1995; Major, Sciacchitano, Crocker, 1993; Steele, 1988).

The first and fourth strategies present no difficulties, because they still imply that low status produces low (group-specific) self-esteem which, according to the present formulation of the self-esteem hypothesis, would reduce the salience of that dimension of social identity within the self-concept. The second and third strategies, however, imply that identities defined as low status in the social structure can provide a basis for positive social comparison, or at least one that is not unfavorable. One simply has to (a) cognitively reduce the size of one's reference group, excluding individuals that differ too

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much with oneself along a particular status dimension, or (b) choose a dimension for social comparison that reflects more favorably on one's in-group.

If these second and third strategies are used by a large proportion of Sri Lankan low-status groups along the dimensions outlined for Hypothesis 1 in Table 1, the predictions made by the self-esteem hypothesis would not be supported. Both high and low-status groups would make self-enhancing social comparisons based on their group membership (albeit for different reasons), and thus would similarly emphasize the importance of the corresponding social identities within their self-concepts. In addition to examining the six linear relationships between group status and identity salience in Table 1, then, some exploratory analyses were conducted that permitted a closer inspection of this relationship under conditions of low group status.

Hypothesis 2: Distinctiveness. Relative in-group size affects the process of self-construction because being a member of a numerical minority tends to increase the felt importance of group membership for the individual (Bartsch & Judd, 1993; Brewer, 1991; Mullen, 1983; Simon & Brown, 1987; Simon & Hamilton, 1994). The theoretical explanation for this phenomenon derives from Gestalt psychology, as Mullen (1991) writes, "The smaller perceptual unit will emerge as the perceptual figure, while the larger perceptual unit will recede into a perceptual ground" (p. 299). This implies that one defines oneself in terms of a social identity to the extent that one is a minority group member in a given context.

Social contexts change, of course: in one's family one might be in the minority in terms of gender, whereas at work one might be in the majority. As the social context

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changes in terms of group composition, the distinctiveness – and thus the salience – of one's own social identity should change. The effect of distinctiveness in transient social contexts has primarily been studied in controlled laboratory settings, where the variable of relative in-group size can be easily manipulated. For the most part this research has supported the view that minority group members tend to identify with group labels more intensely, to engage more in self-stereotyping, and to rate the variability of their in-group to be less than that of majority groups (Bartsch & Judd, 1993; Mullen, 1991; Simon & Brown, 1987; Simon & Hamilton, 1994).

The present study, however, is concerned with being a minority in an enduring or cross-situationally consistent sense. The work of McGuire (1988) and his associates has explored the issue of distinctiveness most extensively from this perspective, taking advantage of naturally occurring situations fitting this description in the U.S.: racial identity salience of school children in predominantly white or predominantly non-white school districts (McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978); gender identity salience as a function of household gender composition (McGuire, McGuire, & Winton, 1979); salience of a variety of school children's physical characteristics as a function of their deviation from the statistical mean for height, weight, hair color (blonde and red-haired minority), eye color (blue-eyed minority), birthplace and age, wearing eyeglasses, and (left) handedness (McGuire & McGuire, 1981, 1982).

The most direct test of this hypothesis within Sri Lanka would be to examine the salience of race for majority (74% of the total population) Sinhalese and compare it with that of minority Tamils (18%) and Muslims (7%). However, for reasons discussed in

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Chapter 4, only Sinhalese were included in the sample. The two tests of this hypothesis that were possible in the present sample involve religious and political identities. For religious identity, the hypothesis predicts that religious identity will be more salient for minority Sinhalese Christians (about 5% of the total population, and 7% of the Sinhalese population) than majority Sinhalese Buddhists (about 69% of the total population, over 90% of the Sinhalese population).

In the case of political identity, two possible tests of the distinctiveness hypothesis were examined, since the meaning of "distinctiveness" can be interpreted in two different ways for this identity. On the one hand, the distinctiveness hypothesis predicts that political identity will be more salient for members of numerically small parties than for members of numerically large parties. On the other hand, because political party affiliations are defined by political attitudes, it is possible that attitudinal distinctiveness – which is correlated, but not isomorphic, with numerical distinctiveness in the Sri Lankan political climate – may be the dimension on which group distinctiveness is most relevant. Thus, in addition to examining the effects of "numerical" minority status (relative group size), the effects of "attitudinal minority status" were also examined. This was done by comparing the salience of political identity for members of politically distinctive or "radical" parties with that of members of politically moderate or "mainstream" parties.

Hypothesis 3: Social change. Sri Lanka has seen a number of structural changes in its economy over the last several decades: overall growth, the expansion of the private sector and of industrial production, and the opening of the economy to international markets. These economic changes demand new social structural arrangements, and I

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argue that in particular they diminish the extent to which "traditional" normative systems continue to serve a functional role. By extension, if these normative systems are less functional, I suggest that the identities that correspond to them should be less salient in the self-concepts of individuals living in urban areas, where these economic changes have been concentrated. Identities relevant to this hypothesis in the present study are those based on "traditional" statuses of caste, age, gender, and town or village of residence, and the "modern" statuses class, occupation, and education.

The caste system, for instance, has been eroding in Sri Lanka ever since the arrival of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. The colonial powers, and more recently global market forces, created opportunity structures that were very much out of alignment with the traditional status hierarchy of caste (Nyrop et al., 1985). Indeed, as noted in Chapter 2, the structure of the caste system in Sri Lanka may have accelerated its own decline. The largest and highest caste, the *Goyigama* (cultivators), were by the nature of their occupation restricted in terms of spatial mobility, and their elite status forbade them from participating in the new, more lucrative occupations of furniture building, carpentry, liquor-distilling, trading, and plantation agriculture (Roberts, 1995). It would be wrong to say the caste system has disappeared but, stripped of much of its functional foundation in privilege and wealth, it continues to exist only in greatly diluted form. These new economic opportunities that run against traditional caste hierarchy are concentrated in urban areas. According to the argument, then, caste identity should be less salient for those living in urban areas, because it is here that the caste system has eroded to the greatest extent.

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As for gender identity, the relevant factor is the effect that the emerging "modern" economic system has had on family structure. More and more women, at all levels of the class hierarchy, have entered the workforce. Women in middle-class urban families may have careers as school teachers, government clerks, or any type of employment in the private sector. Among poorer families, women work in the vast garment factories, as domestic laborers for wealthy families, or take advantage of employment opportunities in the Middle East.[9] Crude labor participation rates (female employment expressed as a percentage of total female population) for women were 31.8% in 1994, up dramatically from 14.2% in 1963 (corresponding figures for males were 49.8% and 64.4%, respectively, Department of Census and Statistics, 1995). These statistical facts attest to a considerable change in traditional family gender roles, which prescribe that men work outside and women work inside the home, and the economic opportunities that underlie such changes are again concentrated in urban settings. Thus, we would expect the salience of gender identity to be reduced in urban, as opposed to rural settings.

In theory, the functional significance of age identity should also have eroded because of these economic changes. Here the relevant factors include: reduced control of older generations over the job choices and marriage arrangements of succeeding generations; the ability to acquire substantial material resources through employment and capitalist enterprise, rather than through inheritance; the spatial separation and mobility of nuclear family units within the extended family structure. This, of course, is not to say that the extended family has disappeared in Sri Lanka, or that older generations have no say in the affairs of succeeding generations, for that would misrepresent the facts.

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Relatively speaking, however, these elements of family structure have certainly declined in significance over the years, particularly in urban areas, and will undoubtedly continue to do so.

As for town or village identity, the argument is simple. The expansion of the economy and the shift to industrial production demands increased spatial mobility. Many residents of the urban centers of Sri Lanka are recent migrants, nuclear family units that have broken off from the rural, ancestral home. Such spatial mobility and internal migration is generally towards an urban center. For this reason, it was predicted that identification with one's current town of residence would be reduced, on average, among those living in large, urbanized towns.

Implicit in the paragraphs above is the assertion that, in the place of the traditional indicators of social status, the "modern" social identities of class, occupation, and education should become relatively more salient for individuals living in urban areas. Because the dimensions of the social structure have become more functionally significant in urban centers, it was predicted that they would likewise be more salient in the self-concepts of individuals living in such areas.

Finally, political party identifications represent one aspect of the modern social system that has effectively penetrated that of rural villages in a significant way. Political party identifications have become a new source of power and authority in the village setting, sometimes cutting across traditional status systems that are founded on caste, class (land-ownership), and "good family name." In most rural locales, political party identifications are the sole means of establishing connections beyond the local

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community to comparatively vast State resources, whereas in urban areas, political party identifications must compete with equally strong status systems based on class and occupation. In short, there are many routes to power and upward social mobility in urban areas, but in rural locales there is increasingly only one: a personal connection with a politically powerful patron. Thus, despite the fact that political identity may be considered a "modern" social identity because of its relatively recent arrival on the national scene, it was predicted that political party identifications would be stronger in rural locales (for a detailed discussion, see Gunesekera, 1994; Jayanntha, 1992; Perera, 1985; Spencer, 1990).

Hypothesis 4: Status inconsistency. The extant research on status inconsistency, the bulk of which was conducted from the 1950s through the 1960s, is sociological in orientation, and is generally focused on the relationship between status inconsistency and psychological well-being (Jackson, 1962; Lipset & Bendix, 1959; Schwab, Bell, Warheit, & Schwab, 1979; Stryker & Macke, 1978). The underlying assumption of this work is that the condition of status inconsistency – being highly ranked on one dimension of social status, and relatively low on another – is stressful because it produces competing role expectations and identity confusion (Hornung, 1977, 1980; House & Harkins, 1975; Shibutani, 1961; Starr, 1977).

Several different theories have been advanced concerning how individuals resolve this stressful status inconsistency within their self-concepts. The version of status inconsistency theory put forward in the present study is derived from that of Lenski (1966; see also Hagerdoorn & Henke, 1991). Lenski suggests that under conditions of

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status inconsistency, individuals attend primarily to status indicators on which they are highly ranked, and disregard those on which they are rank low, in order to maximize self-esteem. Hagerdoorn and Henke (1991) made a similar prediction in a study of north India with the identities caste, class, and religion (majority Hindus were categorized as high status, minority Muslims as low status). Categorizing respondents as "high" or "low" on these identities, Hagerdoorn and Henke argued as follows:

> If social identity is conceived to be *actively constructed* to achieve the most positive identity possible, then the status categorization in which a group has the best position will become most salient....The prediction following from this hypothesis is that status inconsistent groups will tend to collapse a crossed-status categorization to a simple-status categorization, namely that categorization which most favours their own status position. (p. 250)

Although some hypotheses were not tested for lack of suitable respondents (e.g., there were an insufficient number of high-class / low-caste Hindu respondents), the hypotheses that could be tested – for example, high-caste / low-class Hindus and minority status religion / high-class Muslims – supported Hagerdoorn and Henke's formulation of the status inconsistency hypothesis.

Lenski's theory is based on the assumption that the self-esteem motive is primary in the construction of the subjective self-concept. Another proposition of status inconsistency theory, derived from social psychological theories of cognitive consistency (Festinger, 1957; Heider, 1958), called the majority balancing hypothesis (Geschwender, 1967; Sampson, 1963; Zelditch & Anderson, 1966), states in contrast that the motive to maintain cognitive consistency is primary. This alternative hypothesis proposes that

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individuals will identify most strongly with the most status-consistent "cluster" of identities within the self-concept and disregard those that deviate from the average status of that cluster. This hypothesis suggests that status-inconsistent identities, whether high or low status, should be reduced in salience relative to that of the status-consistent cluster.

Lenksi's hypothesis and the majority balancing alternative concur in the predictions they make about low-status inconsistent identities, albeit for different reasons: single low status inconsistent identities represent both a threat to self-esteem and to consistency, and thus should be de-emphasized in salience. The two theories differ in their predictions about the salience of high status-inconsistent identities, however. Lenski's self-esteem hypothesis predicts that status inconsistency of this type encourages individuals to emphasize the salience of the lone high-status identity, on the assumption that in doing so they are bolstering or "shoring up" their otherwise low social status and hence self-esteem. The majority balancing hypothesis, on the other hand, predicts that such identities will be reduced in salience because they represent a threat to cognitive consistency. The present study predicted support for Lenski's self-esteem hypothesis – and thus the primacy of the self-esteem motive in this context over the cognitive consistency motive – although the fit of both theories to the data was examined.

Hypothesis 5: Individualism. Though they address some very similar conceptual issues, individualism-collectivism theory and identity theory have rarely been meaningfully integrated in empirical research designs. Both view the distinction between self-definition in terms of personal traits, abilities, and goals and self-definition in terms of social categories or groups as important. In identity theory, the respective designations

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are "personal identity" and "social identity," and in individualism-collectivism theory the nomenclature is "individual self" and "collective self." Where the theories differ, however, is in how they model the multiplicity of the collective self, and in how they conceive of the relationship between the components of the individual and collective self.

On the theoretical level, the two theories actually do not differ very much on the multiplicity issue. Social identity theory, of course, has always imagined that individuals have as many social identities as group memberships. Conceptualizations of individualism and collectivism have also from the beginning assumed that collectivism was a multidimensional construct, subsuming attachments to a whole range of possible in-groups (see Allik & Realo, 1996; Matsumoto, Kudoh, & Takeuchi, 1996; Triandis, 1988; Triandis et al., 1985). Hui's (1988) early and widely used individualism-collectivism measure (the INDCOL scale) consisted of six separate, in-group specific subscales, for spouse, parent, kin, neighbor, friend, and co-worker. Different collectivisms are possible, therefore, just as different social identities are possible. As these measures have been assimilated into the mainstream and have been applied in specific research settings, however, this aspect of multiplicity has been lost. Individualism and collectivism tend to be treated in applied research as broad opposites on a unidimensional continuum. The present study clearly adheres to the multidimensional conceptualization.

The second difference between the two theories, in how they conceive of the relationship between the individual self and elements of the collective self, is more significant. Whereas identity theory categorizes personal identity as just another element

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of the self-concept, with no unique or privileged self-defining status, on individualism-collectivism measures personal identity (the individual self) is always in some sense opposed to collective identities. The difference is subtle, but consequential. In individualism-collectivism theory, if one does not identify strongly with a particular in-group, then by definition one is individualistic with respect to that in-group: individualistic scale items are treated as statistically equivalent to reverse-coded collectivistic items.[10] This kind of measure does not allow for the possibility that individuals may be indifferent to the fact of their membership in an in-group, but not necessarily individualistic with respect to it. The measurement strategy implies a model of the self-concept in which personal identity, the individual self, is somehow a "core" identity against which the importance of all social identities is assessed, which clearly contradicts a major tenet of identity theory (see above). If individuals do not identify with a particular social identity, it may mean they identify strongly with personal identity, but it may also mean they identify with another category of social identity. A model of the self-concept should allow for both possibilities.

Two mutually exclusive hypotheses are suggested. Based on individualism-collectivism theory, it could be hypothesized that the importance of personal identity will be negatively correlated with that of all social identities within the self-concept. This hypothesis follows from the assumption that personal and social identities are naturally opposed to one another within the self-concept. Conversely, based on social identity theory, it could also be hypothesized that the importance of personal identity will be positively correlated with the importance of achieved social identities, and negatively

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correlated with that of ascribed social identities. This countervailing hypothesis is based on the assumption that achieved social identities – class, occupation, political party, educational level – are more compatible with a conception of oneself as independent or individualistic. Ascribed social identities, on the other hand, should be less compatible with an individualistic self-conception (cf. Deaux, 1996; Triandis, 1989). In terms of identity theory, this hypothesis would imply that the importance of personal identity is positively correlated with that of achieved identities, and negatively correlated with that of ascribed identities. Both of these mutually exclusive hypotheses were examined.

Hypothesis 6: Contact. The variable of social contact has most often been examined in studies of ethnocentrism and intergroup relations (Allport, 1954/1979; Brown, 1984; Hewstone & Brown, 1986a, 1986b; Johnston & Hewstone, 1990; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Stephan, 1987; Stephan & Rosenfield, 1978). Most of these studies have explored the conditions under which contact between social groups either improves or exacerbates intergroup conflict.

The dependent variable in research on group contact, therefore, has historically been whether contact improves or worsens intergroup relations, whereas in the present study the dependent variable was identity salience. A close link between identity salience and negative intergroup attitudes on a dimension of identity, however, may reasonably be inferred from the extensive literature linking social identification to a whole range of cognitive biases favoring evaluation of in-group members and disadvantageous to out-group members. Indeed, in Tajfel's seminal work in social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978,

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1981; Tajfel, Flament, Billig, & Bundy, 1971), the very basis of social identification was in-group favoring and out-group derogating social comparisons.

Thus, in cases where the literature on contact theory predicts negative intergroup attitudes, we may also infer that it predicts heightened salience for the contact-relevant dimension of identity. The one consistent theme to emerge from decades of research on group contact is that, in order to improve intergroup relations, contact must occur within a setting of equal status and involve cooperative pursuit of some common superordinate goals (for reviews, see Brewer, 1996; Gaertner, Dovidio, & Bachman, 1996; Stephan, 1987). If these conditions are not present, intergroup relations are likely to be worsened rather than improved by the experience of group contact. Certainly, these conditions are rarely met in Sri Lanka, where the most basic foundation for a superordinate group identity – that of Sri Lankan nationality – is itself bitterly contested by the island's two main racial groups.

The hypotheses given in Table 1 were based on these lines of reasoning. For a given category of identity, frequent impersonal contact with members of other groups will increase the subjective importance of that identity (and the likelihood of negative intergroup attitudes as well, since such contact is likely to occur in a setting of unequal status) within the self-concept. Conversely, it was predicted that intimate social contact with members of other groups should be negatively associated with the salience of the corresponding identity, because such contact is more likely to occur in the context of equal status and pursuit of common superordinate goals (e.g., friendship).

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Exploratory Analyses

In addition to these six hypotheses, exploratory analyses focused on two other aspects of the self-concept. These aspects were the structure of the self-concept and the structure of racial identity.

Structure of the self-concept. Data concerning perceived similarities among the 11 identities analyzed using nonmetric multidimensional scaling. The data were examined from the perspective of a variety of theoretically interesting questions: whether identities are structured differently for different subpopulations, whether well-defined "clusters" of identities emerge, and whether any identifiable higher-order dimensions seem to structure the self-concept in this context (e.g., achieved versus ascribed identities, "visible" versus "invisible" identities, and so on).

Structure of racial identification. Racial identification was measured using a 23-item, six-point scale. The scale items were selected to represent four likely dimensions of racial identity in this social context: (a) Racial Pride (extent to which individuals are proud of and identify with their racial group; see Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992), (b) Negative Other Group Orientation (extent to which one's own racial identity implies a negative evaluation of members of other racial groups; see Phinney, 1990), (c) Commitment (amount of time spent in activities associated with one's racial group; see Stryker, 1980), and (d) Sociopolitical (attitudes about sociopolitical issues which affect one's racial group; see Sanders-Thompson, 1995). The fit of this four-factor structure was assessed using confirmatory factor analysis. Alternative factor structures were

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derived through exploratory factor analyses and were compared to the a priori structure on the criteria of meaningfulness, parsimony, and statistical fit.

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CHAPTER 4

METHODS

Participants

Ethnic Composition of Sample

The present study focuses on the Sinhalese racial group, which comprises 74% of the total population of Sri Lanka. The reasons for limiting the sample in this manner were threefold. First, the majority of the Tamil population, the next largest minority at 17% of the population, lives in the northern and eastern provinces of the country. These areas were inaccessible to the author because of the ongoing military conflict between Tamil separatists and (predominantly Sinhalese) Sri Lankan government forces, which was largely confined to these areas. Obtaining a sample that was representative of the Sri Lankan Tamil minority was impossible.

Second, the analysis is already reasonably complex. Introducing the variable of race would have made it considerably more so: Tamil and Muslim minority groups hail from substantially different religious and cultural systems, and Tamil culture embraces a caste system completely different from that of the Sinhalese majority. For many hypotheses, separate analyses within each racial group would have been necessary.

Third, the Tamil minority speaks a different language (Muslims are usually fluent in both Sinhalese and Tamil). Thus three separate translations of the research instrument (English, Sinhala, Tamil) would have been necessary, which would have required time and resources unavailable to the author.

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Sampling Method

One thousand questionnaires were distributed through fourteen different school systems across the island of Sri Lanka from January through June 1997. In unsealed envelopes, forms were given to a school official from each chosen school. This individual had approved the project and had agreed to oversee the distribution of the forms to selected classes of school children. The students were instructed to have one of their parents (mother or father, as designated by an envelope label) fill out the questionnaire. Then the students returned it to school the following day. The forms were subsequently retrieved from the school official by the researcher. The sample for this study was thus composed of the parents of primary school children. The sampling strategy did not introduce significant bias for this group, since virtually all children of school age attend primary school in Sri Lanka (United Nations Development Programme, 1997).

The general instructions on the form stated that the questionnaire was "part of a University research project," that respondents were under no obligation to complete the survey, and that the confidentiality of their responses was assured. The instructions also explained that they would receive a debriefing form in a few weeks which would describe the purpose of the study, via the same confidential method of distribution.

As depicted in Figure 1, schools for distribution were selected to represent the full range of geographic and urban vs. rural environments. In addition, because it was deemed critical that the sample contain sufficient variation on the variable of socioeconomic status (SES), within the urban centers of Kandy and Colombo respondents

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of low, middle, and high SES were targeted. This targeting was based on the prestige of the sampled school system, which is a reliable indicator of family SES in the Sri Lankan context. Rural respondents, mainly farmers, were sampled from the Central, North Central, Eastern, and Southern provinces (see Figure 1).

Sample Characteristics

There were 703 respondents who completed at least two sections of the questionnaire correctly (see description of questionnaire design below), yielding a 70% overall rate of response. The sample was 50.1% female, with a mean age of 45.5 years (*SD* = 7.70), had an average 11.1 years of education (*SD* = 3.45), and had an average monthly income of 7,239 Sri Lankan rupees (about US$123; *SD* = 13,506 rupees). The sample is thus slightly wealthier (based on 1995 per capita GNP, average monthly income was about US$58) and more educated than the population as a whole, but this bias was intentional: wealthy, more educated individuals were needed to adequately test certain hypotheses in this study, and so they were sampled somewhat disproportionately.

Survey Instrument

Questionnaire Design

The 12-page questionnaire consisted of four sections (see Appendix for English text of the questionnaire; contact the author for the Sinhala translation and a copy of the questionnaire form in its original format). The first section was designed to assess the importance of each of the 11 social identities within the respondent's self-concept. Respondents were instructed to write the label corresponding to one social identity (e.g., "Sri Lankan" for national identity, "Buddhist" for religious identity, and so on). For

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educational level, respondents were instructed, "write the highest school grade passed, or, if you have a University degree, state what it is." For economic class, respondents were asked, "compared to the average Sri Lankan, what do you think is your economic class? (Please write one of the following in the box: 'very wealthy,' 'somewhat wealthy,' 'middle class,' 'somewhat poor,' 'very poor.')"

Respondents were then asked to consider the following questions with respect to each social label: (a) How important is this label to how you think about yourself? (b) How important is this label to how others generally think about you? (c) How proud are you of having this label? (d) How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others? (e) How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society? (f) When thinking of other people, how important is their [class, gender, race, etc.] to how you think about them? Respondents used six-point scales to respond to each question, where 1 = "the most" and 6 = "not at all."[11] This procedure was repeated for each of the 11 identities. Three separate forms were used, each of which listed the identities in a different sequence, to counterbalance the design against any potential ordering effects.

These six questions were used to represent the three components of a social identity identified by Stryker (1987, 1994; Stryker & Serpe, 1994): salience (items 1, 2, and 6), interactional commitment (item 5), and affective commitment (items 3 and 4). Within Stryker's model, salience refers to the probability that an identity will be invoked in awareness across a variety of social situations; the higher the probability that an identity will be invoked, the higher its salience. Interactional commitment is defined in

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Stryker's model as the social or personal costs entailed in no longer fulfilling an identity, whereas affective commitment refers to the emotional costs attached to such a hypothetical loss. In short, we have the familiar components of any social attitude, with respect to each identity: affect, behavior, and cognition (salience).

For each identity, the internal consistency of these six items was computed. For all eleven identities, the sixth item appeared to tap a different construct, as scale reliabilities were uniformly improved when this item was deleted.[12] Table 2 presents the internal consistencies of the (5-item) scales assessing the salience of each of the eleven social identities, with the last item deleted. All of the alphas are satisfactorily high, implying that the scores assess the theoretical construct of identity salience with a minimal degree of measurement error.

Table 2. Internal Consistencies for Measures of Identity Salience

Social Identity	Internal Consistency (α)
Educational Level	.84
Political Party	.88
Race	.89
Age	.86
Economic Class	.83
Religion	.86
Town / Village	.86
Occupation	.88
Nation	.86
Caste	.92
Sex	.88
Mean Internal Consistency	.87

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The second section was designed to collect data regarding perceived similarities among the 11 identities. Respondents were first asked to write their 11 social labels in designated boxes. Once again, the three separate versions of the questionnaire displayed the labels in different sequences to control for any ordering effects. Then the instructions stated that respondents were to sort the 11 labels into five groups, such that the labels in each group are as similar as possible to each other, and to write their groups in spaces provided. The process was repeated, but with respondents sorting the labels into three groups. Presumably because of the complexity and time-consuming nature of this task, not all respondents completed this section; 436 respondents (44% of the original sample, 62% of the obtained sample) did complete this section correctly.

Based on these groupings, a matrix of dissimilarity was produced, such that the entries in each cell of the matrix reflected the number of times the 436 respondents placed each pair of identities in a different group. The reason for having the respondents group the labels twice was to increase the reliability of the measure, and also to provide data for two different levels of structure. If a respondent placed an identity in the same group in both sorting tasks, that pair was coded as 0 in the matrix for that respondent; if the pair was in the same group only once, then the code was 1, and if placed in different groups both times, then the code was 2 in the respective cell of the matrix. The final matrices that were run in the multidimensional scaling analysis contained the cell entries summed across the entire sample or across theoretically interesting subgroups within the sample (see Chapter 5).

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The third section of the questionnaire consisted of two numerical (six-point) scales. The first was used to assess the importance of respondents' personal identity, and contained 15 items adapted from recent measures of individualism (Freeman, 1997; Singelis, 1994; Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995; Triandis, 1995). Factor analysis revealed the existence of a single factor explaining 19.1% of the total variance. The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of this scale was .69. This acceptable but relatively low reliability coefficient reflects inter-item correlations ranging from .20 to .40, which are typical in individualism-collectivism measures (Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis, 1995).

The second scale in this section assessed the structure of racial identity along the four dimensions of Racial Pride, Negative Other Group Orientation, Commitment, and Sociopolitical Orientation. This scale contained 23 items, taken from extant measures of identity and racial identity (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Phinney, 1990; Sanders-Thompson, 1995; Stryker & Serpe, 1982). The fit of this four-factor a priori structure was assessed through confirmatory factor analysis. Alternative structures were derived using exploratory factor analysis, and the fit of these was also examined and compared to that of the a priori model.

The final section obtained data on certain demographic characteristics, such as language fluency, monthly income, length of residence lived in present town, and membership in any voluntary social groups. After completing the survey, respondents were thanked for their participation, instructed to place the form in the envelope, seal the envelope, and return the packet.

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Coding of Independent Variables

The independent variables in this study are the self-defining social labels from the first section of the questionnaire. All variables were coded so that numerical scores were aligned with the conceptual labels for each variable. Religion, political party, gender, race, and nation are categorical variables, and were coded as such without further processing. Economic class was coded on the five-point scale mentioned above, ranging from 5 = "very wealthy" to 1 = "very poor." Educational level was recoded into six categories with an eye toward achieving equal intervals of educational achievement. The six categories represent the milestones of the Sri Lankan educational system and are described in Table 3.

Table 3. Coding Scheme for Educational Level

Rank	Highest Educational Attainment	*n*	As % of Valid Responses	Cumulative Percentage
1	Completed 5th Grade	57	8.1	8.1
2	Completed 10th Grade	128	18.3	26.4
3	Passed Ordinary Level (O/L) Exam	260	37.1	63.5
4	Passed Advanced Level (A/L) Exam	162	23.1	86.6
5	Bachelor's Degree	81	11.6	98.1
6	Post-Graduate Degree	13	1.9	100.0

NOTE: $n = 701$ due to two missing cases.

For occupation and caste, special coding schemes were developed to rank them in roughly equal intervals of status. There were 164 different occupations listed by 658 respondents. These were sorted into eight roughly ranked categories and coded in terms of increasing status as shown in Table 4. Caste was coded in a similar fashion, with

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Table 4. Coding Scheme for Occupational Status

Ranking	Occupations Typical of Ranking	*n*	As % of Valid Responses	Cumulative Percentage
1	Homemaker	145	22.0	22.0
2	Wage laborer; unskilled worker	58	8.8	30.9
3	Farmer; semiskilled worker	150	22.8	53.6
4	Clerical worker; schoolteacher; small trader; secretary	203	30.9	84.5
5	Middle manager; low ranking government servant; skilled worker	33	5.0	89.5
6	Accountant; skilled worker; middle status government servant	39	5.9	95.4
7	Professional without advanced degree; upper manager	19	2.9	98.3
8	Professional with advanced degree; senior government servant	11	1.7	100.0

NOTE: *n* = 658 due to 45 missing cases.

meaningful caste distinctions assigned different ranks. Table 5 shows the coding scheme adopted for caste, which distinguishes "low" "middle" and "high" caste groups (cf. Ryan, 1953/1993). The rankings encompass several caste groups because a limited number of exemplars of each of the lower caste groups were present in the sample. This coding

Table 5. Coding Scheme for Caste Ranking

Ranking	Castes Within Ranking	*n*	As % of Valid Responses	Cumulative Percentage
1 = "Low"	*Navandanna; Hunu; Vahumpura; Berava; Batgam*	58	8.5	8.5
2 = "Middle"	*Karava; Salagama; Durava*	90	13.2	21.7
3 = "High"	*Govigama*	533	78.3	100.0

NOTE: n = 681 due to 22 missing cases

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scheme, however, is broadly consistent with Sinhalese social reality, in the sense that the distinctions between castes at the bottom of the hierarchy are not important anymore if one is comparing them on a vertical, status dimension.

The town or village of residence indicated by respondents was coded on a four-category index of urbanization (1 = "rural," 2 = "small town near no major urban centers," 3 = "moderate size town or urban outskirts," and 4 = "major urban center."). Towns and villages were categorized on the basis of proximity to the country's major urban centers. Some small villages and towns could not be located on available maps; for these respondents, degree of urbanization was coded by rounding the mean urbanization score for the school of questionnaire distribution (derived from the respondents from that school area whose towns could be coded) to the nearest integer value. It will be recalled from Chapter 3 that degree of urbanization is used here as an indicator of urban-industrial development. To test the sixth prediction of the self-esteem hypothesis regarding the high status of up-country Sinhalese, respondents from the central highlands (Kandy, Matale, and Gampola subsamples) were coded as "up-country" residents, and others were coded as "low-country."

To test Hypothesis 6, the contact hypothesis (see Table 1), the predictor variable – social contact – was measured in three ways. First, intergroup contact was measured at the community level. Based on available census data, respondents' town of residence was classified as "diverse" or "homogenous" in terms of religious and racial identity (see Chapter 2). These two identities are very highly correlated in the Sri Lankan population,

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so religiously diverse communities are also racially diverse. The salience of religious and racial identities was predicted to be greater for those living in racially and religiously diverse locales than for those living homogenous locales. The assumption was that impersonal, superficial intergroup contact – but not necessarily more intimate or involving forms of contact – would be more likely in diverse communities.

The other two measures of social contact were based on respondents' degree of agreement with two items from the racial identity questionnaire (see Appendix): "I often spend time with people who are not Sinhalese (Item 3)," and "All of the people I consider close friends are Sinhalese (Item 23)." Item 3 was treated as a measure of intergroup contact (on the dimensions of race and religion which, again, are very highly correlated) within respondents' secondary social groups. Item 23 was reverse-scored and treated as a measure of intergroup contact on these two dimensions of identity within respondents' primary social groups. It was predicted that intergroup contact within secondary groups would be positively associated with identity salience (implying negative intergroup attitudes) because, in Sri Lanka, such contact is more likely to occur in the absence of equal group status in common superordinate goals. In contrast, because intergroup contact within primary groups is more likely to have occurred in the presence of these conditions, it was predicted that this form of contact would be negatively associated with religious and racial identity salience.[13] Table 6 displays the intercorrelations among the demographic variables in the sample.

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Table 6. Intercorrelations Between Demographic Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Town/Village Exposure to Economic Development[a]							
2. Occupational Status[a]	.26						
3. Economic Class[a]	.33	.26					
4. Educational Level[a]	.46	.49	.36				
5. Caste Rank[a]	.05	-.07	.01	-.05			
6. Age	.08	.26	.04	.08	-.09		
7. Religion[b]	.06	.07	.03	.07	.03	.00	
8. Gender[c]	-.07	.34	-.05	-.07	-.05	.26	-.02

NOTE: Sample sizes vary from 637 to 703. With $n = 650$, $r = .08$ has an associated $p = .05$ (two-tailed); when $r = .10$, $p = .01$ (two-tailed); when $r = .13$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed). [a]Numerical codes are aligned with the conceptual labels for these variables; see text for more detail. [b]Buddhist = 1, Christian = 2. [c]Female = 1, Male = 2

Questionnaire Translation

The questionnaire was initially prepared in English by the author, following the format and item wording guidelines for translation recommended by Brislin (1970, 1980, 1988). It was subsequently translated into Sinhala by a bilingual Sinhala language instructor, and then back-translated into English by a bilingual professor of English Literature. The few discrepancies with the English original were subjected to further rounds of back-translation, until an equivalent translation was achieved. In urban areas, where English is more widely spoken and for some respondents is their mother tongue, a bilingual version of the questionnaire was distributed, in which each item was written first in Sinhala, then in English. In rural areas a Sinhala-only version was distributed to save paper and because pretesting revealed that the English translation was confusing and distracting to monolingual respondents.

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Qualitative Interviews

In addition to the survey data, 20 open-ended interviews were conducted, focused on the research hypotheses, with individuals from a wide range of demographic backgrounds. The interviews took from 35 to 70 minutes and were designed not to test the hypotheses but to supplement the survey data with narrative insights in the respondents' own words. Some of these interviews were conducted with the aid of a bilingual interpreter. The format of these interviews was similar to that of the survey: respondents were asked to rank their 11 identities, which were written on small cards, in terms of importance to them. This ranking was then used as a basis for discussion, with the respondents being asked why they chose that particular ranking, and reviewing any experiences or critical incidents relevant to the identities. Respondents were then instructed to arrange the identities into similar groups, as in the questionnaire, and to give reasons for classifying them in this way. The results of these interviews thus provided an experiential context for interpreting the survey results.

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CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Hypotheses

Salience Hierarchy

Table 7 presents the mean salience ratings across the entire sample for the eleven social identities, ranked in descending order of salience. This stratified sample was not, and was not intended to be, representative of the total Sinhalese population. This qualification aside, the data are nevertheless based on a wide range of respondents.

Table 7. Salience Hierarchy of Identities for Total Sample

Identity	Mean Salience	*SD*	*n*
1. National Identity	4.98	1.09	598
2. Religious Identity	4.80	1.24	599
3. Racial Identity	4.77	1.30	600
4. Gender Identity	4.50	1.33	602
5. Occupational Identity	4.19	1.41	574
6. Educational Identity	4.05	1.17	594
7. Age Identity	4.00	1.29	600
8. Town / Village Identity	3.99	1.32	601
9. Caste Identity	3.68	1.65	588
10. Political Identity	3.57	1.50	580
11. Class Identity	3.53	1.22	601

NOTE: Sample sizes vary due to missing values.

Some points about these data deserve mention. First, the synergy between national, religious, and racial identities among the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka – often described but never empirically documented – is clearly evident in these data. Whether

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the uniformly high salience of these identities reflects something fundamental and historically unchanging about the Sinhalese mindset (Kemper, 1991), or is merely temporarily heightened due to the current ethnic war in the country (which centrally involves all three identities), is a debatable issue. The low position of caste identity attests to the assertions of many sociologists that the importance of this dimension of social structure is fading. Finally, the low position of political identity in the list somewhat contradicts several theorists' assertions that politics are universally the "consuming passion" of the Sinhalese (Jupp, 1978; Spencer, 1990).

Hypothesis 1: Self-Esteem

Linear contrasts. The self-esteem hypothesis states that when social comparisons at the intergroup level yield favorable self-evaluations on some category of identity for an individual, then such individuals should emphasize the salience of that identity within their self-concepts. Conversely, when social comparisons yield unfavorable self-evaluations on a dimension of identity, the salience of that identity will be de-emphasized within the self-concept. All six of the predictions based on the self-esteem hypothesis were supported, as can be seen visually in Figure 2. Table 8 presents the results of statistical tests of these relationships. The last column of Table 8 shows the effect size correlation ($r_{Y\lambda}$) as defined by Rosnow and Rosenthal (1997) which, in this case, is the correlation between the linear contrast weights (λ) and the individual scores (Y).

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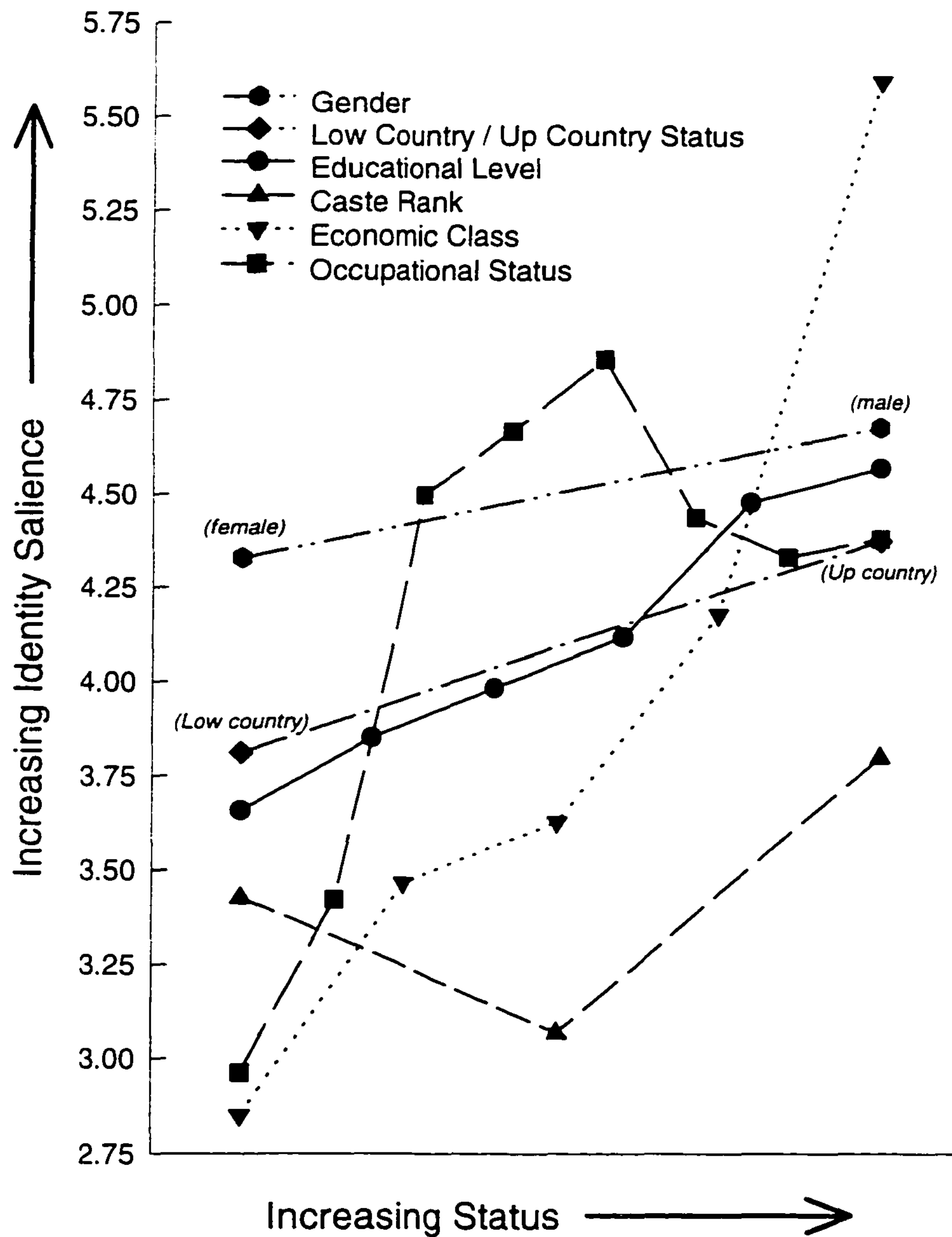

Figure 2. Relationship Between Identity Status and Identity Salience for Six Identities Relevant to Self-Esteem Hypothesis. The two highest levels of social class are based on samples of nine and two respondents. The two highest levels of occupational status are based on 18 and 11 respondents. All other data points based on 20 or more respondents.

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Table 8. Linear Contrasts for Self-Esteem Hypothesis

Hypothesis Test	*k*	*df*	*t*	*p*	effect size ($r_{Y\lambda}$)
1. Class ID Salience by Social Class	5	593	4.99	.00000030	.20
2. Occupational ID Salience by Occupational Status	8	531	8.79	$< 1 \times 10^{-10}$	.34
3. Educational ID Salience by Educational Level	6	588	4.76	.00000097	.19
4. Caste ID Salience by Caste Status	3	571	3.16	.00079	.13
5. Gender ID Salience by Gender[a]	2	600	3.43	.00030	.14
6. Town/Village ID Salience by Up/Low Country Residence[b]	2	599	4.71	.0000012	.21

NOTE: Due to substantially different *n* per condition, the weighted means procedure was employed for all linear contrasts. All *p*-values are one-tailed.
[a]Male gender ID salience > female gender ID salience. [b]Up country town/village ID salience > Low country town/village ID salience.

Exploratory analyses. The contrast analyses in Table 8 indicate the presence of positive linear relationships. Particularly in the case of class and educational identities, the data are consistent with a "strong" statement of the self-esteem hypothesis (see Figure 2), which predicts a salience-enhancement effect for high status identities as well as a salience-dampening effect for low status identities. In the case of occupational and caste status, however, curvilinear relationships between status and salience are also implied in Figure 2. Indeed, non-linear trends accounted for significant portions of the between-groups sums of squares in both these cases.

For occupational status, a quadratic contrast (λ = -7, -1, +3, +5, +5, +3, -1, -7) again using the weighted means procedure was highly significant, $t(531) = 63.17$, $p < 1 \times 10^{-10}$, effect size correlation ($r_{Y\lambda}$) = .30. The residual variation not accounted for by the

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linear and quadratic contrasts did not reach significance, $F(5, 531) = 1.81, p = .11$. For caste status, a quadratic contrast ($\lambda = -1, +2, -1$) using the weighted means procedure was significant, $t(571) = 2.47, p = .0068$, effect size correlation ($r_{Y\lambda}$) = .10.

The significant quadratic trend in the case of occupational identity suggests one of two possibilities. On the one hand, the most parsimonious interpretation would be to conclude that the effects of occupational status on occupational identity salience are simply not exclusively linear. The salience-dampening effect of low-status is clearly evident in Figure 2, but the salience-enhancement effect for high status occupations is less evident, particularly at the very highest levels of occupational status.

On the other hand, a less parsimonious, but theoretically more interesting speculation would be to conclude that the observed pattern of results suggest the operation of a second predictor of occupational identity salience, specifically, the degree to which one's social rank is consensually validated. Those at the middle levels of the hierarchy defined by this dimension of social status occupy social categories whose status is contested in the Sinhalese social structure. Those who possess contested identities may experience them as more salient not only because they impact self-esteem, but additionally because their status is ambiguous and is directly implicated in broader, highly charged debates about how Sinhalese society was, is, and should be structured. By the same token, those at the highest and most secure echelons of a status hierarchy may take their social prestige on this dimension for granted, just as those at the lowest levels of the hierarchy take their low status for granted.

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This second speculation would imply that what we are seeing in Figure 2 concerning salience of this identity are the effects of two separate predictors, superimposed on one another: a linear effect for identity status (following the self-esteem hypothesis) and a quadratic effect raising the salience of contested occupational statuses, which happen to be located in the middle of the occupational hierarchy in Sri Lanka. The largest jump in occupational identity salience, for example, is at the third rank in the present study's coding scheme, and this rank consists primarily (75%) of cultivators. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, the status accorded to employment in agriculture depends on who you ask. Large segments of the population, despite the recent emergence of more lucrative occupations in business and wage labor, still regard agriculture as a most dignified and honorable profession. Farmers who emphasize the salience of this identity within their self-concept may do so because it reinforces self-esteem, but also because such a stance communicates their defense of a "traditional," agricultural social order in the face of "modern" economic changes in Sinhalese society.

By the same token, the fifth occupational category, which exhibits the highest occupational identity salience, consists primarily (74%) of relatively well-off businessmen or private sector managers, whose status is also highly contested. Here the same process may be at work, but instead it is the "traditional" social order that undermines the high status of occupations in "*bisnis*" in the "modern" social hierarchy. Thus the high salience of occupational identity for this group may reflect self-esteem motives as well as the motive to defend a "modern" social order that supports their relatively high status.

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The three highest and two lowest levels of the occupational status hierarchy consist of occupations that are ranked high and low, respectively, in both the traditional and "modern" social orders. Thus any "social ambiguity" effect for these groups would be absent here, leaving us with only the self-esteem effect. These results are discussed further in Chapter 6.

Because the sample is fairly large, the obtained sample means for caste identity salience may be regarded as reliable, and thus it is reasonable to speculate on the implications of the apparently curvilinear relationship between caste status and caste identity salience. The most counterintuitive finding here is the relatively high salience of caste identity for low caste groups. The most parsimonious interpretation of this result emphasizes the decline in the vertically ranked aspect of the caste system in Sri Lanka over the last several decades. The assertion of caste identity or "group pride" for those ranked lower in the system, then, may communicate group members' rejection of this vertical aspect of caste. Perhaps low-caste individuals on this dimension do indeed employ one of the strategies mentioned by Tajfel: adopting new criteria for group comparison which favor more positive evaluation of one's own (nominally low-status) group.

Hypothesis 2: Distinctiveness

The distinctiveness hypothesis states that one defines the self in terms of a demographic characteristic to the extent that one is in the minority on it in a particular social context. The identities relevant to this hypothesis within the present sample are religion (Buddhist majority versus Christian minority) and political party (small parties

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versus mainstream parties). The salience of religious identity for Buddhists who had correctly answered this section (n = 585) was, contrary to prediction, higher (M = 4.82, SD = 1.23) than for Christians (n = 13, M = 4.14, SD = 1.37), and this difference just reached significance, $t(596) = 1.97$, $p = .049$ (two-tailed).

For political identity, numerically large parties include the United National Party (UNP), the People's Alliance (PA), and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) (actually the core of the currently ruling People's Alliance coalition). Numerically small political parties in the sample include the People's Liberation Front (JVP), the Independent party, and the Marxist parties: the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), the Sri Lanka Communist Party (CP), and the Peoples' United Front (MEP). Marxists were not numerous in the sample, and because their parties share similar ideologies, they were considered as a single group.

Almost 20% of the sample (135 respondents) did not indicate a political party affiliation. During the interviews it was apparent that some people were reluctant to reveal their political party affiliation for reasons of personal safety: politics in Sri Lanka can have violent consequences. A further 88 respondents (12.5%) stated that they belonged to no political party, and many of these used the opportunity to express their disgust with Sri Lankan politics generally: "I condemn Sri Lankan political parties," "corrupt politicians are destroying this country." Figure 3 shows how the salience of political identity varies across the groups of respondents that did indicate a political party affiliation.

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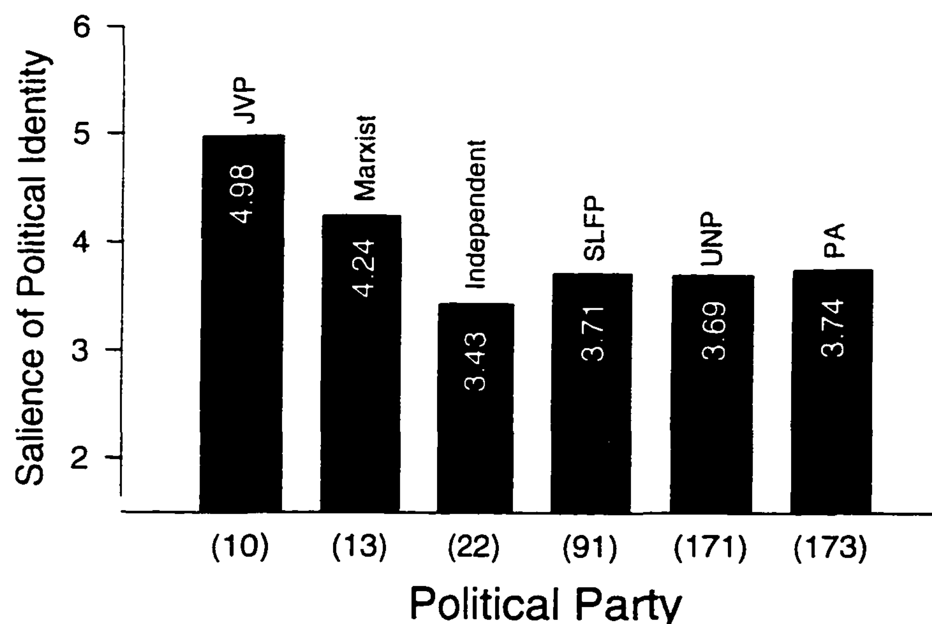

Figure 3. Salience of Political Identity by Type of Political Party. Sample sizes vary as indicated in parentheses.

The first test of the distinctiveness hypothesis examined the effect of being a member of a party that is a numerical minority. This would imply that political identity salience for members of the first three parties in Figure 3 should exceed that of the latter three. A contrast making this comparison ($\lambda = +1, +1, +1, -1, -1, -1$) was significant. $t(474) = 2.20$, $p = .028$ (one-tailed). These results, overall, support the distinctiveness hypothesis.

One numerically small party, the Independent party, received the lowest mean score for identity salience in the sample. Politically speaking, the Independent party is in fact a moderate party, mainstream in its policies, though out of the mainstream in terms of the size of its electoral base. The JVP and the Marxist parties, on the other hand, are truly radical. As noted above, the JVP has been the organizing force behind two nationalistic,

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Marxist-oriented insurrections, one in 1971 and another in 1988-90. The Marxist parties have in practice generally stayed within the political system, but in principle their policies are similarly radical. This variant of the distinctiveness hypothesis was tested using another contrast analysis, not orthogonal to the first, comparing the salience of political identity for the first two (radical) groups in Figure 3 to that of the latter four ($\lambda = +2, +2, -1, -1, -1, -1$). This contrast was highly significant, $t(474) = 3.20$, $p = .00069$. Overall, therefore, the results are consistent with the hypothesis that, in the case of political identity, it is the distinctiveness of one's political attitudes and not the numerical size of one's party that most powerfully predicts heightened political identity salience.

Hypothesis 3: Social Change

The social change hypothesis stated that processes of urban-industrial development demand new social structural arrangements that diminish the extent to which "traditional" normative systems continue to serve a functional role. By extension, if these normative systems are less functional, the identities that correspond to them should be less salient in the self-concepts of individuals living in urban settings, where these processes of social change are concentrated. Table 9 presents the results for the relationships that were predicted to follow from this general hypothesis.

The three parts of this hypothesis received different levels of support. Traditional identities were significantly reduced in salience in urban areas, but "modern" or achieved

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Table 9. Results for Social Change Hypothesis

Hypothesis Test	*df*	*t*	*p*	effect size ($r_{Y\lambda}$)
Predicted Negative Linear Relationships:				
Caste Identity Salience by Level of UID	584	2.22	.013	.09
Age Identity Salience by Level of UID	596	4.18	.000015	.17
Town / Village Identity Salience by Level of UID	597	2.11	.017	.10
Gender Identity Salience by Level of UID	598	2.24	.013	.09
Political Identity Salience by Level of UID	576	5.20	.00000010	.21
Predicted Positive Linear Relationships:				
Educational Identity Salience by Level of UID	590	-.54	.29	–
Occupational Identity Salience by Level of UID	570	-.33	.37	–
Class Identity Salience by Level of UID	597	-1.18	.12	–

NOTE: The unweighted means procedure was used because the *n* per condition ($k = 4$) was roughly equal. Positive *t*-values indicate that results are in predicted direction. All *p*-values are one-tailed.

social identities were not necessarily increased in salience. Finally, as predicted, political identity was significantly more salient in rural areas than in urban locales. The group means are displayed visually for the significant effects in Figure 4.

Hypothesis 4: Status Inconsistency

Operationalizing status inconsistency. The status inconsistency hypothesis is conceptually sound and theoretically appealing. It has proved fiendishly difficult to test empirically, however, due to two quantitative issues. First, the very idea of inconsistency presupposes the existence of an underlying common scale of social status in general.

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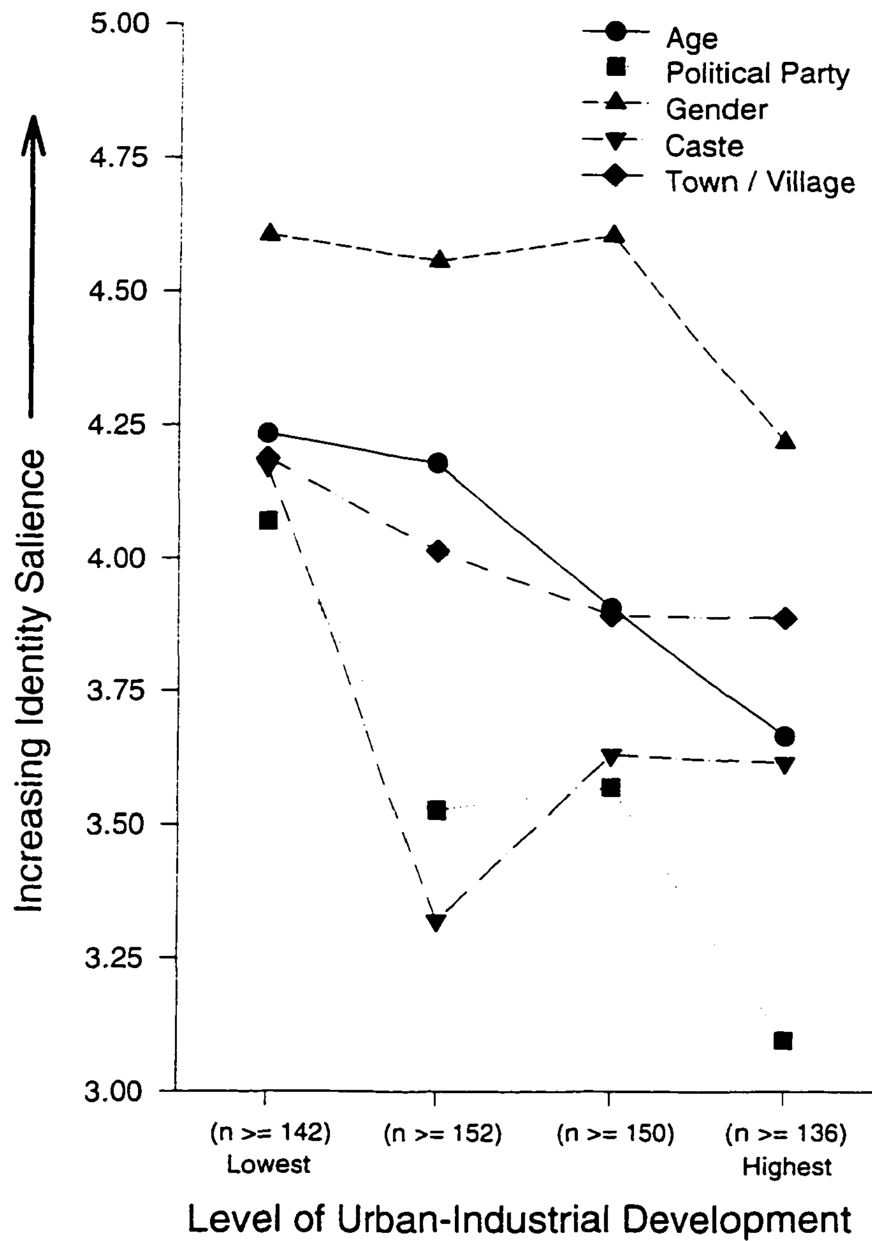

Figure 4. Salience of Selected Identities by Level of Urban-Industrial Development. Only the significant effects from Table 9 are displayed here.

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Such a scale would, for instance, imply that possessing the highest possible caste status and occupational status should confer equivalent levels of "general" social status. The first problem was to construct such a general scale of social status against which the ranks of individual, vertically ranked identities – caste, occupational status, educational level, and economic class in the present sample – could be assessed and compared.

Converting the four status hierarchies to standard scores would be the simplest and most obvious strategy, except for one problem: only in the case of educational level is the distribution normal. The distributions for economic class and occupational status are both positively skewed (see Table 4), while that for caste is extremely negatively skewed (see Table 5). This situation does reflect the actual distribution of these identities in the population, but it also means that standardized scores for the identities would not be equivalent.[14] In light of this fact, the four status hierarchies were converted to a common scale of general social status in a manner that did not take into account their actual distribution in the population. The common scale consisted of three levels, arbitrarily labeled "low," "medium," and "high," assigned the corresponding numerical values 1, 2, and 3. For caste identity, the coding scheme outlined in Table 5 was transposed directly onto this new scale. For educational level, each of the three levels contained two consecutive ranks from the ranking scheme described in Table 3. For occupational status, ranks 1, 2, and 3 in Table 4 were coded as "low general social status," ranks 4 and 5 were coded as "medium," and ranks 6, 7 and 8 were coded as "high." For economic class, the two lowest ranks were collapsed into "low general social status," the two highest into "high," and the middle class rank into "medium."[15]

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The second problem lay in the quantitative definition of inconsistency. At what point is it appropriate to assume that a quantitative discrepancy in general social status between two identities implies a qualitative experience of status inconsistency? The present study addressed this dilemma by quantifying inconsistency as a continuous variable in the following manner. Focusing on one category of identity at a time, separate analyses were conducted for those classified as "low" and "high" on that identity. For each "low" and "high" status group, a respondents' mean social status for the other three identities was computed on the arbitrary "general" social status hierarchy described above. Then the linear correlation between this mean value and the salience of the identity in question was computed. The status inconsistency hypothesis predicted that this correlation would be negative in both cases.

For example, for a group of those ranking "low" on caste status (coded as "1.00"), the mean status (on this new "general" scale) for occupation, education, and economic class was computed. For a given subject, if this value was equal to 1.00, this would imply that the low caste status was perfectly consistent with that of the other three status identities. Values greater than 1.00 would imply status inconsistency, and a value equal to 3.00 would imply maximal inconsistency of caste status with the subject's other three status identities. The hypothesis predicted that, within this low-ranking caste group, the higher one's rank on the other three status identities, the greater the threat the possession of a low-status caste identity poses to one's overall self-esteem. One way of dealing with this threat would be to de-emphasize the importance of one's caste identity within the self-concept, and it was predicted here that such individuals would be motivated to do so.

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Thus the hypothesis predicted a negative correlation between the salience of caste identity and rank on these other three identities.

For a group of those ranking "high" on caste identity (coded as 3.00), a somewhat different logic would apply. Within this group, the possession of a high average status (*M* = 3.00) on the other three identities would imply status consistency; such individuals can claim a high rank on all four status hierarchies. In contrast, as the average status on these other three identities approaches 1.00 (all low status), high-caste individuals would experience greater status inconsistency: eventually, caste may be the only identity in their possession on which they can claim a high status. Here, the hypothesis implied that such individuals would be motivated to emphasize the importance of their caste identity within their self-concept as much as possible, in order to bolster or "shore up" their overall self-esteem. Those who possess high ranks on all status identities, in contrast, have many structurally sanctioned routes to high overall self-esteem, and thus, as a group, would be expected to emphasize the importance of their high caste status less, relatively speaking. The hypothesis therefore again predicts a negative correlation between the salience of caste identity and rank on these other three identities.

Results. This same logic and analytical strategy was employed with the other three identities, yielding a total of eight linear correlations, all of which were predicted to be negative. The results are displayed in Table 10. Notice that the hypothesis was strongly supported for caste and occupational identities, but not for educational and class identities.

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Table 10. Results for the Status Inconsistency Hypothesis

Subpopulation	*r*	*df*	*p*
Caste Identity			
"Low" Status Group	-.46	36	.0015
"High" Status Group	-.13	449	.0027
Occupational Identity			
"Low" Status Group	-.09	254	.075
"High" Status Group	-.22	63	.039
Class Identity			
"Low" Status Group	-.06	203	.20
"High" Status Group	.11	8	.38
Educational Identity			
"Low" Status Group	.09	131	.15
"High" Status Group	-.12	86	.13

NOTE: The correlations reflect the relationship between the salience of the identity for members of "high" and "low" status groups and the mean status rank for the other three identities; see text for rationale. All p-values are one-tailed.

Perhaps the most parsimonious ad hoc interpretation of these overall findings is that occupational and caste identities simply have a greater impact on self-esteem when they are inconsistent than class and educational identities do when they are inconsistent. That is, occupational and caste identity are simply more potent determinants of overall self-esteem. Occupational identity, for instance, ranks highest in the overall salience hierarchy of these four identities for this population (Table 7), and this identity also provides the strongest support for the self-esteem hypothesis (Table 8).

In the case of caste identity the significant effects for status inconsistency may derive from the fact that this is the identity on which the most extreme examples of status inconsistency are exhibited. Caste is the only status-based identity not highly correlated with the other indicators of status (Table 6). Thus for caste status, the "treatment" levels

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(of inconsistency) are much stronger. Given larger samples and more extreme examples of status inconsistency for educational and class identities, similarly hypothesis-supporting effects may have been detected. But the rarity of extreme status inconsistent individuals for these latter two identities is a demographic fact in this population.

Hypothesis 5: Individualism

There were two versions of the individualism hypothesis set forth in Table 1. The first states that the salience of personal identity is negatively correlated with that of all social identities within the self-concept. The second states that the salience of personal identity is positively correlated with that of achieved identities such as class, occupation, education, and political party identification, and negatively correlated with that of the ascribed identities caste, nation, age, race, and gender. Religion and town / village were left out of the analysis because they could not be easily classified: in theory they are achieved, but in practice they are usually ascribed. Table 11 presents the results of this analysis.

The results are not compatible with either hypothesis. The only significant correlations were positive, so the first hypothesis is convincingly rejected. As for the second hypothesis, there were two positive correlations of personal identity salience with achieved identity salience, but the positive correlations with the salience of ascribed identities were even greater.

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Table 11. Correlations of Salience Between Personal and Social Identities

Identity	*r*	*df*	*p*
Achieved Identities			
Class Identity	.16	572	.000053
Occupational Identity	-.08	553	.030
Educational Identity	.05	570	.12
Political Identity	.15	557	.00017
Ascribed Identities			
National Identity	-.001	574	.49
Caste Identity	.23	565	9.7×10^{-9}
Age Identity	.07	576	.046
Race Identity	.15	576	.00014
Gender Identity	.14	577	.00034

NOTE: Sample sizes vary as indicated in parentheses due to missing values. All reported *p*-values are two-tailed, because many effects were opposite to prediction.

Hypothesis 6: Contact

The contact hypothesis predicted relationships between three types of social contact and the salience of religious and racial identities. The first part of the hypothesis examined whether the salience of religious and racial identities differed significantly according to the racial and religious diversity of one's community. The two predictions were that (1) racial identity will be more salient in racially diverse locales, and, (2) religious identity will be more salient in religiously diverse locales.

The sample was divided into four categories, three containing respondents from religiously and racially diverse communities and the last containing respondents from culturally homogenous (Sinhala Buddhist) areas, on the basis of their self-reported town of residence. The first category contained respondents from Gampola, an up-country

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town outside of Kandy which is extensively populated by Muslims as well as Sinhalese Buddhists. The second category contained respondents from the urban center of Colombo, which is the most racially and religiously diverse area on the island. The last "diverse" category contained respondents from Amparai and Kantale, both towns in the Eastern provinces which have roughly equal proportions of Muslims, Sinhalese Buddhists, and Tamil Hindus. These two areas have also been directly affected by terrorist activity, as they lie within the area claimed by Tamil separatists as their homeland. The "culturally homogenous" category consisted of respondents from towns of moderate to small size in the Southern, Central, and Northwestern provinces, as well as respondents from the outskirts of the Colombo metropolis. Figure 5 depicts the salience of racial and religious identity for these four groups.

Planned contrasts between the four groups ($\lambda = +1, +1, +1, -3$), comparing the diverse to the homogenous communities in terms of identity salience, were significant for both religious and racial identity. For religious identity, using a separate variance estimate, $t(384) = 1.69$, $p = .046$ (one-tailed), and for racial identity, also using a separate variance estimate, $t(440) = 1.74$, $p = .041$ (one-tailed). The contrast correlations ($r_{Y\lambda.NC}$ or the partial r between scores and contrast weights after partialing out all noncontrast variation) were small (both $r_{Y\lambda.NC} = .08$). Religious and racial identities were more salient for those respondents living in culturally diverse communities.

The second test of the social contact hypothesis predicted a negative relationship between the salience of racial or religious identity and intergroup contact on these

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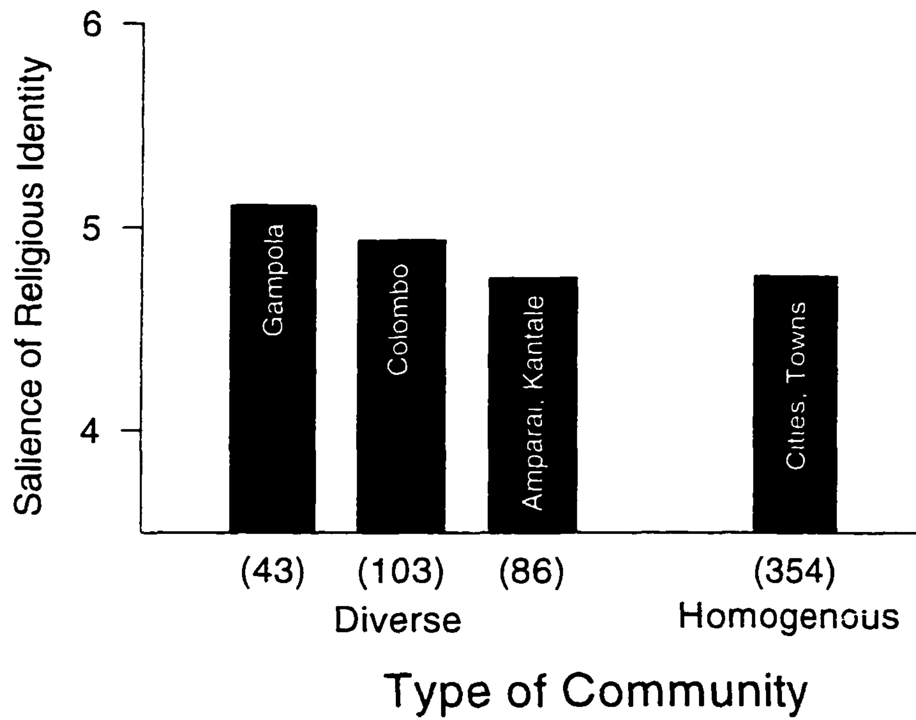

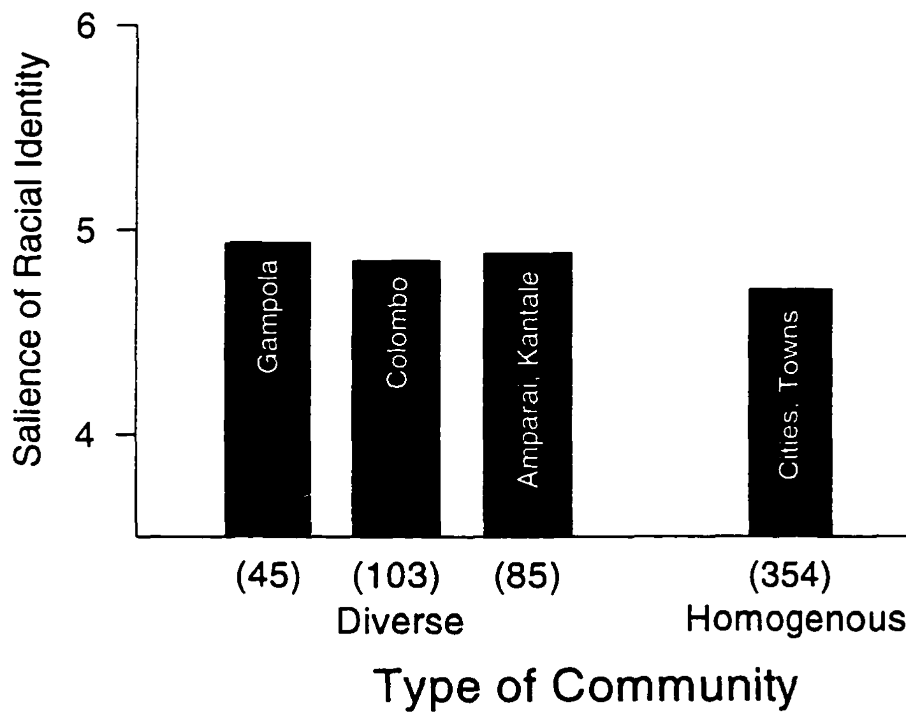

Figure 5. Salience of Religious and Racial Identity by Diversity of Community. Sample sizes vary as indicated in parentheses.

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categories of identity within respondents' secondary groups. Lastly, the third test of the social contact hypothesis predicted a negative relationship between the salience of racial or religious identity salience and intergroup contact on these dimensions within respondents' primary groups. Both variables were continuously measured, and so the relationships between them were assessed by a linear correlation. The results are displayed in Table 12.

Table 12. Relationship between Intergroup Contact and Identity Salience

Hypothesis Test	*df*	*r*	*p*
Intergroup Contact Within Secondary Groups			
By Religious Identity Salience	568	-.06	.076
By Racial Identity Salience	570	-.09	.015
Intergroup Contact Within Primary Groups			
By Religious Identity Salience	560	-.16	.000063
By Racial Identity Salience	561	-.22	.000000046

NOTE: All *p*-values are one-tailed.

Primary group contact was, as predicted, negatively associated with the salience of racial and religious identities. Contrary to prediction, however, secondary group contact was also negatively associated with the salience of these identities, and the relationships were significant or approached significance. Implications of these findings are considered further in the next chapter.

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Exploratory Analyses

Structure of the Self-Concept

The matrix of dissimilarity for the 436 respondents that provided data for this section was run through a multidimensional scaling analysis, limited to two dimensions for ease of interpretation. The plot based on the derived coordinates of the identities in two-dimensional space appears in Figure 6. Recall that the identity grouping task was based on the respondent's own identities and not the general identity category, although the general categories appear as labels in Figure 6. For instance, a respondent might have placed the label "female" and "39 years" in the same group, not the general categories "gender" and "age." The two-dimensional solution succeeded in explaining 86% of the matrix variance and had a Kruskal's stress value of .19. This stress value is moderately high, and so a second analysis was run for three dimensions. The three dimensional solution explained 91% of the matrix variance and had a more reasonable stress value of .13, and is presented in Figure 7.

Immediately apparent in both solutions is their degeneracy. Degenerate solutions (see Kruskal & Wish, 1978; Shiffman, Reynolds, & Young, 1982) occur when objects in the configuration are clustered such that the distances between clusters are all greater than the distances within clusters. The statistical clustering often reflects the natural clustering of the objects being compared, and as such is empirically interesting, but because of it the intercluster distances in the configuration do not accurately reflect conceptual distances between the objects. Rather, the clusters are "forced" to adopt the configuration that

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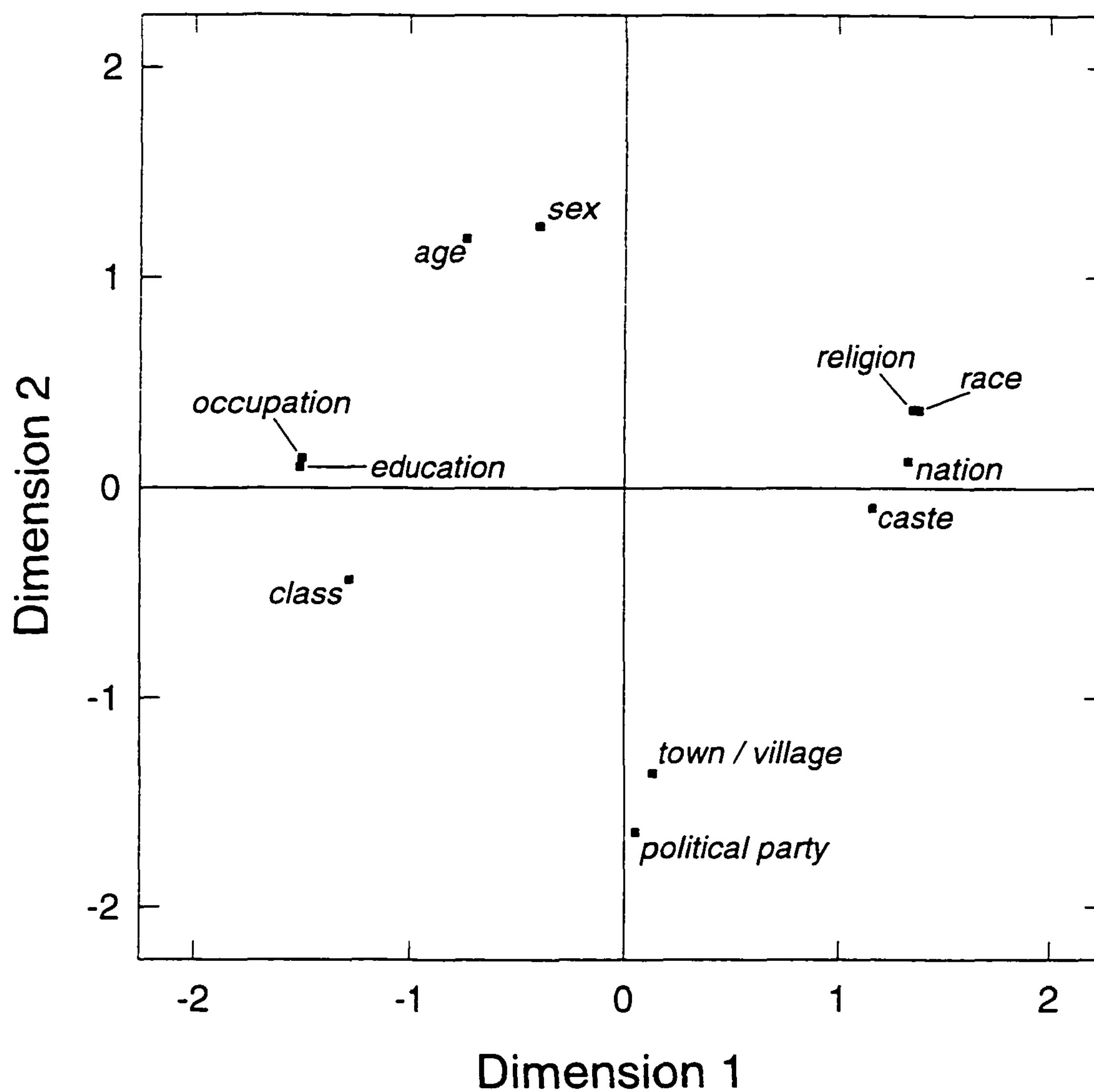

Figure 6. Perceived Similarities Among Categories of Identity: Two-Dimensional Plot. Based on data from 436 respondents.

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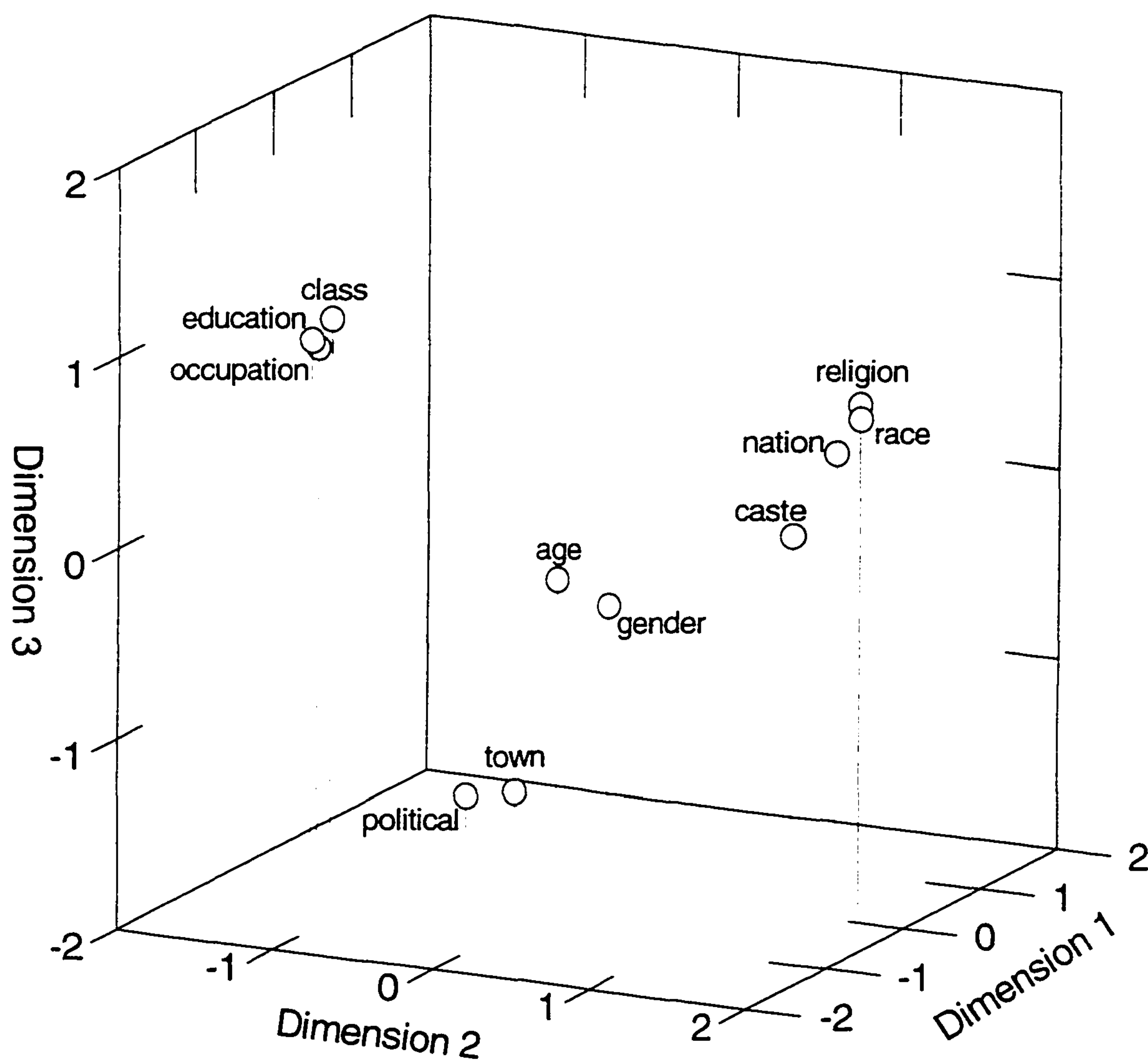

Figure 7. Perceived Similarities Among Categories of Identity: Three-Dimensional Plot. Based on data from 436 respondents. Dashed lines drawn manually to approximate intercluster distances and depict tetrahedron configuration.

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maximizes intercluster distances and minimizes intercluster distances. Three clusters generally form an equilateral triangle and four, as in the present data, a tetrahedron (Kruskal & Wish, 1982, p. 30). The four-cluster configuration therefore shows up as a square in the plot of the two-dimensional solution in Figure 6, and as a tetrahedron in a plot of the three-dimensional solution in Figure 7.

The dissimilarity matrix was re-examined through a hierarchical clustering analysis. The dissimilarity matrix was first converted to a proximity matrix (by subtracting each entry from a constant equal to the largest dissimilarity +1). The proximity matrix was entered directly into a cluster analysis using between-groups linkage. The dendrogram in Figure 8 depicts the agglomeration schedule visually. The four clusters are clearly visible and also comparable in terms of intra-cluster distances

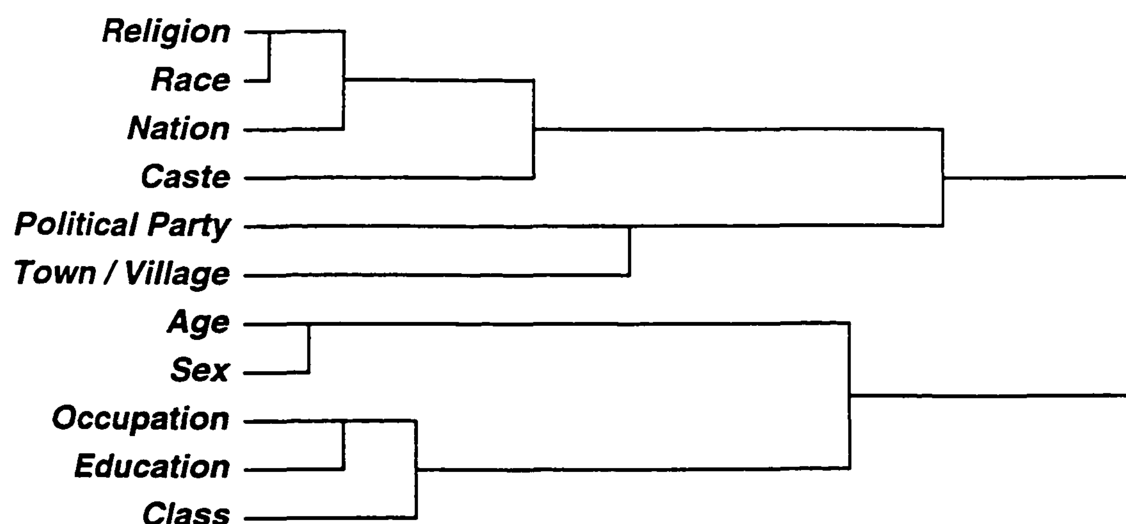

Figure 8. Dendrogram for Cluster Analysis of Proximity Matrix.

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between single identities. One exception is the age-sex cluster, which appears somewhat tighter than it did in the MDS analysis.

The advantage of the cluster analysis is that it also permits an interpretation of inter-cluster distances. The age / sex and the occupation / class / education clusters combine into one large cluster, while the religion / race / nation / caste and political party / town-village clusters combine with one another. These two higher-order clusters appear to distinguish those identities which form the most powerful bases for collective behavior from those which identify demographic categories without a corresponding consciousness of collective belonging. In other cultures this statement might not hold true for these social categories – gender has more of this sense of "group-ness" in US culture, for instance, while religion probably has less – but in Sri Lanka the conceptual fit of this higher-order solution is quite good.

The data for the salience of the 11 identities provides an opportunity to validate these higher-order dimensions using an independent source of data. I would argue that if two identities are perceived as "similar" or associatively linked in the cognitive structure of the self-concept, the resulting "cluster" of identities (and all the identities included within it) is likely to be invoked more frequently in consciousness. The cluster as a whole can be invoked by a situation that is relevant to any single identity within it; as a result, the identities within the cluster may become chronically salient (cf. Linville, 1985, 1987). By extension, identities perceived as "similar" in the self-concept should also be correlated in terms of their individual salience. Table 13 presents the results of a factor analysis of the salience scores for the 11 identities. Two factors were extracted based on

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analysis of the scree plot; the item loadings reflect the results of a principal components analysis using varimax rotation.

Table 13. Factor Analysis of Identity Salience Ratings

Item (Identity)	Factor 1	Factor 2
Factor 1: Collective Identities (41.0% variance)		
Religious Identity	**.79**	*.11*
Racial Identity	**.78**	*.18*
National Identity	**.69**	*.18*
Gender Identity	**.64**	*.34*
Town / Village Identity	**.62**	*.40*
Caste Identity	**.61**	*.19*
Political Identity	**.58**	*.11*
Factor 2: Non-Collective Identities (11.3% variance)		
Class Identity	*.15*	**.75**
Educational Identity	*.17*	**.71**
Occupational Identity	*.13*	**.69**
Age Identity	*.37*	**.64**

NOTE: Item loadings above .50 shown in bold type.

With the exception of gender identity, the distinction between identities that form a basis for collective behavior in Sri Lanka and those that do not is replicated in this analysis. The factors that emerged here do not simply reflect high versus low salience ratings, as comparison of the factor structure here with the mean identity salience scores for the entire sample reveals many discrepancies (see Table 7). The collective / non-collective distinction appears to be the primary dimension structuring the Sinhalese self-concept in Sri Lanka.

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This identity structure was remarkably stable across subpopulations within the sample. These analyses were repeated for theoretically interesting sub-groups (Sinhala Christians; urban versus extremely rural subpopulations; women versus men) with the expectation that some differences in the structure of the self-concept would be evident but, with some minor exceptions, the same clustering pattern consistently emerged. Although not intended as cross-validation studies, a great deal of confidence can be placed in the validity of this clustering pattern for this cultural group because it was manifested across this wide range of subpopulations.

Structure of Racial Identity

The last issue this study was designed to address was the structure of one of the most important identities in Sri Lanka, that of race. The 23-item racial identification scale was subjected to a principal components analysis using varimax rotation. Analysis of a scree plot led to the extraction of four or five components: both eigenvalues appeared to form moderately distinct "elbows" in the plot. In both solutions, two items loaded poorly on both components and were dropped from subsequent analyses (including those involving the a priori structure). The structures for the four and five-component solutions were entered into a confirmatory analysis, along with the four-component structure described above. Table 14 presents the results of the confirmatory factor analysis for the three alternative solutions.

The fit statistics for the a priori model should not be judged quite as strictly as those for the exploratory models as this model was effectively blind to the observed data. With that in mind, the measures of fit for the four-component a priori model are

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Table 14. Measures of Fit for Three Alternative Solutions

Model	*df*	χ^2	*AGFI*	*RMSEA*[a]	*AIC*[b]	Critical *N*[c] (α = .05)
Independence Model	210	1983.5	.659	.116	2025.5	83
4-factor (a priori)	183	761.1	.848	.071	857.1	178
4-factor (exploratory)	183	572.9	.897	.058	668.9	236
5-factor (exploratory)	179	519.6	.905	.055	623.6	255

NOTE: All chi-square values in this table are highly significant, $p < 1 \times 10^{-10}$.
[a]An RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation) value of about .05 or less indicates a close fit of the model in relation to the degrees of freedom. [b]The AIC is computed as 2(number of model parameters) + χ^2; unlike the χ^2, which only assesses model fit, the AIC index penalizes less parsimonious models 2 points for each increase in model complexity (the addition of each model parameter). [c]Hoelter's index: the index computes the largest sample size for which one would accept the null hypothesis (at α = .05) that the model is correct. Hoelter argued that values in excess of 200 indicate satisfactory model fit.

marginally acceptable. Of the other two models, the five-component model is preferable, because the measures of model fit which strike a compromise between parsimony and statistical fit (the RMSEA and the AIC) all clearly favor the five-component over the four-component exploratory model.[16]

The five-component model has the advantage of statistical fit over the four-factor a priori model, while the strength of the latter is its continuity with the research literature. The case was decided by comparing the conceptual fit of the two models. Because the five-component model was conceptually sound, and because the research on which the four factor model is based was conducted in other cultural contexts, the five-component model was proposed as the best solution. Table 15 shows the loadings from the principal

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components analysis for the five-component solution using orthogonal rotation. Table 16 shows the factor intercorrelations and subscale internal consistencies.

Some of the a priori components. Racial Pride and Sociopolitical. showed up in the five-factor exploratory analysis. The Commitment and Negative Other Group Orientation components. however. did not emerge. The factor intercorrelations are not surprising given the content of the items within each component. with one interesting exception worth mentioning: the relationship between Racial Pride and Multicultural Orientation is strongly negative. This would imply that, among the Sinhalese of Sri Lanka at least. strong pride in one's own racial group necessarily implies a reticence to associate with and develop intimate relationships with members of other racial groups (see also Table 12). Finally. in order to contextualize these components in terms of the data for identity salience. Table 17 displays the correlations between the five component scores (estimated using the complete regression method), racial identity salience. and several key demographic variables.

The correlations of the factor scores with racial identity salience are as expected. The negative correlation of racial identity salience with Multicultural Orientation factor again supports the assertion that strong identification with one's racial group implies a reticence to associate and develop friendships (see Table 15 for item wordings) with members of other racial groups.

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Table 15. Loadings for Proposed Five-Component Solution

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Factor 1: Racial Pride (16.3% variance)					
I am very happy to be a Sinhalese.	**.79**				
I have a strong sense of pride in being Sinhalese.	**.78**				
I have a very strong sense of attachment to my ethnic group, the Sinhalese.	**.74**				
I feel that the Sinhalese should have more representation in government than they do now.	**.49**				
I participate in the traditions that are connected with being Sinhalese, such as food, music, and customs.	**.36**				
Factor 2: Racial Denial (9.9% variance)					
I often think it would be better if people of different ethnic groups kept to themselves and didn't have relationships with members of other ethnic groups.		**.59**			
I sometimes wish that I could "quit" being Sinhalese in the same way that people can quit a job or an organization that they don't like.		**.52**			
I have often felt that others discriminated against me because I am Sinhalese.		**.50**			
I am not very clear about what it really means to be Sinhalese in a society like ours that has so many cultures as well as "Sri Lankan" culture.		**.49**			
I don't really think too much about the ethnic conflict in this country.		**.49**			
If I could be born all over again, I would not want to be born a Sinhalese.	-.39	**.47**			
I don't participate very much in activities that have to do with Sinhalese culture.		**.47**			
Factor 3: Sociopolitical (7.5% variance)					
I am extremely attentive to political changes that affect my ethnic group.			**.75**		
I have spent time trying to learn more about my ethnic group: the history, traditions, and customs of the Sinhalese.	.36		**.71**		
I have strong opinions about what the government should do to end the ethnic war in this country.			**.64**		

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Table 15. (continued)

Item	Factor 1	2	3	4	5
Factor 4: Racial Indifference (6.6% variance)					
In meeting someone for the first time, I think that knowing their ethnic group is not very important.				**.63**	
I think being a Sri Lankan is more important than being a Sinhalese.				**.62**	
I have not really spent much time thinking about what it means to be Sinhalese.				**.56**	
I think that people exaggerate the importance of ethnicity in this country.				**.44**	-.35
Factor 5: Multicultural Orientation (5.5% variance)					
I often spend time with people who are not Sinhalese.					**.74**
All of the people I consider close friends are Sinhalese.					**-.70**

NOTE: Principal components analysis using varimax rotation, listwise deletion of missing cases, valid $n = 626$. Total variance explained 45.8%. Item loadings of less than .35 are not displayed in this table.

Table 16. Subscale Internal Consistencies and Factor Intercorrelation Matrix

	Factor 1	2	3	4
Factor 1: Racial Pride (α=.68)				
Factor 2: Racial Denial (α=.54)	-.22			
Factor 3: Sociopolitical (α=.62)	.48	-.35		
Factor 4: Racial Indifference (α=.41)	-.40	.46	-.34	
Factor 5: Multicultural Orientation (α=.44)[a]	-.37	.03	-.12	.09

NOTE: Factor intercorrelations derived from results of confirmatory factor analysis. Reliabilities in parentheses are Cronbach's alpha.
[a]Second item in this factor was reverse-scored.

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Table 17. Correlations Between Racial Identity Factor Scores, Racial Identity Salience, and Selected Demographic Variables

	Racial Identity Factor				
	Racial Pride	Racial Denial	Socio-Political	Racial Indiff.	Multi-Cultural
Racial Identity Salience	**.60**	**-.16**	**.16**	**-.23**	**-.16**
Demographic Correlates					
Urban-Industrial Development	.001	**-.19**	-.02	.02	**.13**
Educational Level	**-.15**	**-.25**	.07	.05	**.12**
Income	**-.13**	**-.20**	.05	.07	.06
Age	-.03	**-.11**	.02	.01	.07
Gender[a]	**-.17**	-.06	.07	.04	**.12**

NOTE: Sample sizes vary from 537 to 628 due to missing cases. Correlations for which $p < .05$ (two-tailed) are listed in bold type. When $n = 550$, and $r = .08$, $p = .05$ (two-tailed); when $r = .11$, $p = .01$ (two-tailed); when $r = .14$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed).
[a]0 = female, 1 = male

Urban residence and age were negatively associated with Racial Denial and positively with Multicultural Orientation, while education and income were negatively associated with Racial Pride and Racial Denial and positively with Multicultural Orientation. All of these demographic variables would seem, therefore, to be associated with an reduction in extreme attitudes concerning racial identity overall. Males seem to share this general attitude of indifference, since relative to females they showed less Racial Pride and a stronger multicultural orientation.

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CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

These findings may be appraised from three different perspectives, corresponding to the broad objectives set forth in the introduction to this study: that of Sri Lanka studies in general, of identity theory within social psychology, and of cross-cultural psychology. The following pages evaluate the study's empirical findings from each of these perspectives.

Contribution to Sri Lanka Studies

Virtually all social scientific analyses of social identity in Sri Lanka to date have addressed the historical, cultural, or otherwise structural antecedents of the construct. Individuals are necessarily carriers of social identity within these models, and their behavior in society is theoretically governed by the content of these identities. But in fact the links between the macro-social and individual levels of analysis are very tenuous in these models, if they are even addressed at all. The question of how and why individuals actually come to identify with these macro-social groups in the first place, and then how these identifications determine group formation and collective behavior in Sri Lanka has largely been left open to question. Within this context, the present study contributes to Sri Lanka studies in two important ways: (a) by providing some much-needed empirical tests of the predictions of these macro-social models at the individual level, and, (b) by

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examining how psychological factors can also enter into this relationship between self and society in ways that purely macro-social models of identity might not predict. With regard to the latter, Tajfel's final analysis of the psychological variables in the construction of social identity applies to the present study as well.

> The major aim...has been to determine what are the points of insertion of social-psychological variables into the causal spiral [of social identity and intergroup relations]; and [the] argument has been that, just as the effects of these variables are powerfully determined by previous social, economic, and political processes, so they may also acquire, in turn, an *autonomous* function that enables them to deflect in one direction or another the subsequent functioning of these processes. [italics in original] (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 23)

Complementing Macro-Social Theory

Nation, race, religion. In terms of providing data to complement macro-social theory in Sri Lanka studies, the study fulfilled this objective in a number of ways. Most obviously, the pre-eminent salience of the identities nation, race, and religion for the entire sample (see Table 7) supports the dominant theme of virtually all social scientific considerations of Sinhalese nationalism and racial identity published since Independence. Racial identity was slightly less salient among the wealthy, r (income rank × salience of racial identity) = -.11, $p = .012$ (two-tailed), and the educated, r (years of education × salience of racial identity) = -.11, $p = .007$ (two-tailed), but overall the salience of these three categories of identity was remarkably consistent and strong across all levels of the social structure (for all other correlations of these three identity salience scores with urbanization, income rank, and education, $r < |.06|$).

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The consistent salience of these identities at the individual level is at once an effect of a historical and cultural factors, but is also a cause of them, in that their psychological importance ensures that these issues will remain at the center of Sri Lankan politics for a long time to come. The ongoing civil war, ruefully described as "the mother of all problems" in this developing country, is one such historical factor: it continues to fuel and be fueled by the salience of these identities at the individual level.

Moreover, the cluster analysis of the identities (see Figures 6, 7, and 8) supports the assertion that not only are these identities highly salient, but they are perceived as essentially isomorphic. One theme in the qualitative interviews with Sinhalese respondents was the assertion that, in particular, national and racial identities were one and the same. In part this is due to the fact that the word "nation" is a recent addition to the Sinhalese language. When the word was first introduced, the word for "race" (*jaatika*) was employed. This in itself is revealing, but it also presented definite difficulties for questionnaire design. When respondents were asked to indicate their race (translated as *jaatika*), the examples "Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Burgher" were suggested. When they were asked to write their nationality, the word "national (racial) status" (translated as *jaatika tatwaya*) was used, as it is on government forms. In addition, the instruction "write 'Sri Lankan'" was included for national identity to insure that there was no ambiguity. It is telling that, despite these unambiguous instructions, some respondents (17) wrote "Sinhalese" or "Sinhalese-Sri Lankan" for both their national status and their racial group. One such respondent even wrote, "It is wrong to write these separately – they are the same."

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Linville's research in self-complexity theory (1985, 1987) suggests that identities which are cognitively linked within the self-concept also tend to be more salient. "Clusters" of identities are relevant to a wider range of social situations than single identities, they tend to be invoked in concert and, as a result, become chronically salient. Linville regarded self-complexity as an individual difference variable, with individual-level effects: it seems reasonable to speculate, however, that these data concerning the consistent salience and isomorphism of the nation / race / religion cluster of identities at the population level has population-level effects (i.e, the intractable civil war).

The present study was not undertaken solely to understand the roots of the ethnic conflict, but because of the importance of this issue some comments concerning the relevance of these findings to the political situation in the country are merited. Certain readers familiar with the Sri Lankan situation will be quick to equate the salience and isomorphism of these identities among the Sinhalese with "Sinhala chauvinism," and thus implicitly point the finger of blame for the current ethnic conflict in the direction of the Sinhalese majority. Such an assertion is supported by the well-established link between the strength of group identification and intergroup prejudice and discrimination, validated across a flood of studies within the social identity theory paradigm (Tajfel, 1982; see also Mullen, 1991, Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992 for meta-analyses of this voluminous literature).

I would like to make two methodological observations on this point. First, we need to exercise some caution in extrapolating from this research in social identity theory, which was conducted for the most part with European and North American samples.

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There is virtually no empirical research on this question using Sri Lankan samples, and the limited research which has been conducted using South Asian (Indian) samples has demonstrated some counterintuitive effects deriving from the overlap between religious, racial, and linguistic identities in this cultural context (Hagerdoorn & Henke, 1991; Hewstone, Islam, & Judd, 1989).

The second, more significant observation addresses a shortcoming of the present study. No Tamil or other minority respondents were included in the sample, for the reasons discussed in Chapter 4, and so it is impossible to evaluate to what extent similarly strong and isomorphic constructions of these identities (and by extension, any negative constructions of racial outgroups) may exist for other racial groups. The failure to include Tamils and members of other minority groups in the sample was motivated by practical and methodological considerations, and should not be construed as implying that the attitudes of the island's minorities are irrelevant to the ongoing debate on race and ethnicity in Sri Lanka. They are not: chauvinists and extremists on both sides of the conflict are not in short supply, as Wickremeratne (1995a), a recent scholar of Sri Lankan nationalism notes,

> Both forms of nationalism (the Tamil and the Buddhist), through widely separated, curiously have much in common: a sense of grievance, a time table of agendas to be accomplished, the unilateral vision of an idealized society, an unwillingness to compromise, and above all, an aura of self-righteousness. (p. ix)

Other findings. Because the majority of macro-social research on identity in Sri Lanka has focused on these three identities, it is primarily in this respect that the study's

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findings are relevant to Sri Lanka studies generally. However, some other macro-social hypotheses involving specific social identities were supported.

The assertion that political identity is central in rural Sinhalese social structure and identity was supported (see Table 9). The fieldwork of Spencer (1990) and Perera (1985) in three separate small villages provided the inspiration for this hypothesis to be tested on a larger scale in this study. The present study does not provide any basis for testing the causal mechanism for Spencer's explanation, but the data are certainly consistent with it:

> Without the common areas of everyday work there are no obvious shared understandings based on productive relations which are equal meaningful for all the people who now live in Tenna [a pseudonym for village where Spencer did his fieldwork]....Economic change in Tenna has presented major problems for a local social idiom which in the recent past linked work, birth, and belonging. That idiom no longer stretches to cover more than a portion of the population....People have had to look elsewhere for the necessary common experience needed to define themselves and their collective and individual identities. (p. 128)

His argument is that this new "common ground" of experience in rural Sinhala society is political identification, hence the heightened salience of political identity (also see Gunasekera, 1994; Jayanntha, 1992).

The moderate relationship ($r = .19$) between up-country versus low-country residence and town / village identity salience also supports the assumption in many macro-social analyses of social identity that this historically based source of identity is still alive and well in the Sinhalese consciousness. This effect, moreover, was not related to that of the relationship between urban-industrial development (town size) and town /

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village identity salience, since there were towns of all sizes in both the up and low country areas. Controlling for the effect of urban-industrial development, the partial correlation between up-country / low-country residence and town / village identity salience was slightly higher, $r = .21$.

Racial identity. The present study also makes a unique contribution to Sri Lanka studies its approach to the content of Sinhalese racial identity. Social science research, as conducted by both Sri Lankan and foreign scholars, has approached the topic of racial identity in Sri Lanka through examinations of ancient, recent, and contemporary history, through impressionistic observation of current events, or by extrapolating to the national level based on systematic participant observation conducted in one or two rural villages. What has been sorely lacking is survey data based on a large scale, representative sample, which among other things is capable of revealing important differences in the construction of racial identity at different levels of the social structure.

The present study makes a beginning in filling this gap. The items in the racial identity scale covered a wide range of racial attitudes, and from this wide range of content five substantive factors emerged. More studies focused exclusively on the racial dimension of identity are of course necessary, but these themes – Racial Pride, Racial Denial, Sociopolitical, Racial Indifference, and Multicultural Orientation – are good bets as those structuring Sinhalese racial identity as it is constructed by the Sinhalese themselves.

The reliability of the observed correlations between these racial identity factors and some important demographic variables (Table 17) was compromised by the small

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number of items within each factor and the low internal consistency of the factor scores, but they do certainly support the assertion that Sinhalese racial identity is not a monolithic entity. Although racial identity is consistently salient, different Sinhalese individuals, depending on their location in the social structure, appear to construct the salience of racial identity somewhat differently. This finding has important implications for structural theories of identity which presume that all members of an racial group construct their racial identity in an equivalent manner.

Psychology and Sinhalese Social Identity

In the context of this structural and qualitative orientation that has prevailed in research on Sri Lankan social identity, perhaps the present study's most significant contribution to Sri Lanka studies is its demonstration that examining social identity on its own terms, as a cognitive construct in the minds of individuals, can meaningfully contribute to our understanding of the relationship between Sri Lankan selves and Sri Lankan society. In particular, five of the six proposed theoretical postulates – self-esteem, distinctiveness, social change, status inconsistency, and social contact – received empirical support and thus provide the beginnings of a theoretical framework that links selves to elements of Sri Lankan social structure in predictable ways.

Granted, some of the effects for these five postulates, though statistically significant, are rather small. But considering the number of other variables which influence the salience of social identities, it is noteworthy that these theories were supported as powerfully and as consistently as they were. Personality traits, different reference group orientations, idiosyncratic individual experiences, differential impact of

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social structural processes: we know that all of these alter the construction of social identity at the individual level. But because these factors were not controlled in the design of the present study, their effects were effectively lumped into the error term. increasing the "noise" against which strength of the "signal," of the six original postulates had to be evaluated. Since so many predictions were supported in the absence of statistical controls for the effects of these competing hypotheses, their effects must be viewed as fairly robust.

Practically speaking these postulates allow us to make more refined predictions at the individual rather than group level of analysis concerning the construction of social identity. Assuming that the range of identities that an individual can "choose from" (i.e., cognitively emphasize) is known, it can be predicted within a certain margin of error which ones they will emphasize as most important to their self-definition.

Contribution to Identity Theory

Methodological Contributions

The present study is interactionist in approach, since it explicitly acknowledges that the relationship between self and society is bi-directional (Charon, 1992; Hewitt, 1991). One's place in the social structure determines one's "objective" social location but, as the results of the present study indicate, psychological processes also influence how these "objective" identities are construed and enacted. There is nothing inherent in Sri Lankan social structure that, for example, can be said to encourage those highly ranked in occupational status to view this social identity as more self-defining than those ranked lower down in this status hierarchy. We must posit the existence of a

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psychological motivation. that individuals will cognitively emphasize those identities that make themselves feel good. powerful. and capable relative to others. in order to explain this pattern. Social structures direct the construction of identity, but only through the mechanism of psychological processes at the individual level. The results of the present research demonstrate the utility of this approach.

The present study also makes a contribution in a domain that is very important to identity theory, but which has been relatively little studied: the consideration of multiple identities. Although the concept of "multiple selves" has been central to all versions of identity theory generally, most actual identity research has focused on one or perhaps two identities at a time. More recent research has addressed the issue of multiplicity and overall self-concept structure directly (Deaux, 1992, 1995; Reid & Deaux, 1996; Rosenberg, 1988), but the complexity of the data collection methods have prohibited large-scale, nomothetic analysis (see Deaux, 1995 and Wong-Reiger & Taylor, 1981, for exceptions). Thus the data on identity structure in the present survey represents a unique contribution to this area of identity theory.

A further contribution of this study to identity studies generally is its use of data based on naturally occurring identities and social groups. Although it has generated a great deal of promising theorizing, one weakness of the interactionist approach is that it has proven difficult to test empirically "in the field." Many of the studies that have been conducted in support of this paradigm have been undertaken within the laboratory, and have employed artificial or "minimal" groups defined by identification with trivial attributes or attitudes (e.g., hair color, preference for one of two works of art). But

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interactionism was developed to understand the links between larger social structures and self-structures; controlled experiments may have the advantage of eliminating extraneous influences, but one might reasonably ask whether it is truly possible to represent complex social structures in the laboratory. In controlling for so-called "extraneous influences," the minimal group paradigm may is arguably so minimal that it has eliminated the very phenomena it purports to study (see Shiffmann & Wicklund, 1992). In contrast, these data based on naturally occurring structures and identities provide important verification of several hypotheses which are consistent with the symbolic interactionist paradigm.

Perhaps the most important reason for testing identity theory outside the laboratory is that different identities engage different psychological processes. In the laboratory, for artificial or "minimal" identities, factors like relative group size, visibility of group differences, group status and so on can be manipulated for any social identity. Thus the theoretical focus is not on the identity per se, but on these context-independent processes of social identification and its impact of intergroup behavior. But outside that laboratory, identities are not so malleable. As we have seen, some identities are powerfully defined by status differences, whereas for others status is irrelevant and relative group size or social contact is most important. Moreover, many identities instantiate all of these processes and others as well. Research with naturally occurring groups, like that of the present study, is therefore critical if we are to understand how these theoretically context-independent identity processes are actually embodied and interact within real social identities.

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Postulates of Identity Theory

Self-esteem. Self-esteem is a psychological construct, and it is implicitly part of several extant theoretical writings on Sri Lankan social identity, but typically is only introduced as a necessary theoretical link between social structural entities and the individuals that constitute them. The motivation to construct a positive self-image may well be an important basis of group identification, but acknowledging this tells us nothing about which groups a particular individual will identify with, and how strongly they will identify with each. The version of the self-esteem hypothesis put forward in the present study presents more refined analysis: since many group memberships are ranked in terms of status, high-status identities should present a more efficient route to a positive self-image then low-status identities. For all six of the identities that are consensually ranked on some dimension of status, the predicted positive linear relationship between high status and high salience was observed.

The exploratory non-linear analyses attempted to disentangle the possible sources of this effect: was the positive relationship due to salience enhancement for high-status groups, salience dampening for low-status groups, or both? The data suggest that it depends on which identity is under consideration. For two identities, educational level and class, the positive relationship between salience and status was truly linear; for these identities, the data were compatible with the hypothesis that both salience enhancement and dampening effects were present.

For occupational identity, only a salience dampening effect for low status identities was observed, which is still broadly consistent with the thrust of the self-esteem

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hypothesis. But a highly significant non-linear relationship between status and salience was also observed. It was suggested that processes of social change may interact with self-esteem processes in the construction of status-based identities. In the context of rapid social and economic change, certain occupations acquire an ambiguous status, because they are ranked differently in the "traditional" versus the "modern" status hierarchies. It was hypothesized that persons occupying these ambiguous positions, caught in the crossfire of competing social structural processes, may be motivated to emphasize the importance of such contested identities within their self-concepts, in an effort to communicate the broader predominance of the social system (modern or traditional) that most effectively supports their own high status.

Again, this hypothesis was proposed purely as an ad hoc attempt to explain some unanticipated results concerning the relationship between occupational status and occupational identity salience. All that can be said for the present is that future research more directly focused on this question is necessary. Nonetheless, it does suggest exciting new possibilities for research, some of which may be generalizable to other developing countries undergoing similar processes of social change. The structural tension between the "modern" and the "traditional" social orders is arguably the single most important "key" to understanding current Sri Lankan social structure, and disputes over the status of various occupations is one of the most important ways this tension is expressed.

For caste identity, however, both low and high extremes of status were similarly associated with enhanced caste identity salience. The linear correlation in fact emerged as significant only because of the dramatically different cell sizes (see Tables 5, 8). A

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linear contrast comparing caste identity salience across the three levels of caste status using unweighted means, for example, was not significant, $F(1, 576) = 1.97, p = .16$. The curvilinear effect is clearly dominant in the case of caste. Thus low-status groups, in the case of caste identity, exhibit relative high caste identity salience, perhaps because they employ some of the strategies for maintaining high self-esteem in the face of low "objective" group status (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

One intriguing speculation concerning this last result is suggested by the fact that caste identities have more of the attribute of "group-ness" than these other three status-ranked identities. As was noted in Chapter 2, the evaluative, vertically ranked aspect of the caste system has withered considerably over the last several decades, but it still remains a moderately potent basis for communal solidarity. In short, there is a degree of horizontal solidarity at each level of the caste hierarchy that is lacking in the primarily vertically integrated socioeconomic identities based on class, occupation, and education. Perhaps this greater sense of group solidarity at the lower levels of the caste hierarchy protects the self-concept against low self-esteem on this dimension of identity (Major, Sciacchitano, & Crocker, 1993). Unfortunately caste represents the only dimension of identity included in this study that is characterized by both vertical integration and horizontal solidarity, so the speculation cannot be tested further here, but it represents another interesting possibility for future research in other contexts with other social identities meeting these dual criteria.

Distinctiveness. The distinctiveness postulate was tested in the context of religious and political identities. In the case of religious identity, the effect for relative

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group size was significant, but in a direction opposite to prediction. Majority Buddhist respondents were found to emphasize their religious identity to a greater extent than minority Christian respondents. Granted there were few Christians (n = 13) in the sample, but religious identity was so salient for majority Buddhists (see Table 7) it is doubtful that including more Christians in the sample would have reversed this result.

One could argue that Sri Lankan Buddhists perceive themselves as a minority group in their region of the globe, and hence cite these results as support for the distinctiveness postulate. Certainly that is one of the many factors contributing to the salience of religious identity for Buddhists in Sri Lanka, but it is a geopolitical factor, not a social psychological one. In any case, the operative mechanism in the distinctiveness postulate is perceiving oneself as a minority in "one's usual social groups" (McGuire, 1984), and it would be difficult to argue that the entirety of South Asia constitutes a "usual social group" for the average Sri Lankan Buddhist; and Christians are also a minority in South Asia generally. Thus the effect of distinctiveness, if it does operate at all for religious identity in the Sri Lankan context, has been overwhelmed by the impact of structural factors on the salience of religious identity, most notably the ethnic conflict.

In the case of political identity, members of small political parties did emphasize political identity to a greater extent than did members of larger parties. A finer analysis, however, revealed that actually only members of the more radical political parties exhibited heightened political identity salience: if the distinctiveness postulate is the causative factor, it would appear that the distinctiveness of one's political attitudes, not

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relative group size, is what matters most. This makes intuitive sense, though this version of the hypothesis does not transfer easily to an analysis of other identities.

These overall results therefore suggest limits to the distinctiveness hypothesis. McGuire's studies (Mcguire & Mcguire, 1982, 1988) were conducted "in the field," but his respondents have all been students, from primary school through college. The "usual social groups" of students are more consistent than those of working adults, which were sampled in the present study. The social worlds of children and young adults are determined primarily by family and school, and so distinctiveness on some attribute in either of these contexts should have a large effect. The "usual social groups" of working adults, on the other hand, are likely to be more numerous and diverse; what makes one distinctive in one context may well identify one as a majority group member in another. It should also be acknowledged that children, for developmental reasons, may be more attentive to distinctiveness ("being different") than adults. These possibilities, or any others that can reconcile the present study's mixed results with the more uniformly supportive ones of McGuire and his associates, bear closer examination in future research with social identity and the distinctiveness postulate.

Social change. Social structures provide the "raw material" for the construction of social identity: the groups and institutions with which individual social actors identify. As these structures change, then, social identities also change. Based on this observation, it was argued in the present study that economic development along liberal market lines, such as that which has taken place in Sri Lanka over the last several decades, has diminished the importance of ascribed or "traditional" social structures, while

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simultaneously increasing the significance of achieved or socioeconomic social structures. The salience of the social identities corresponding to these structures should also have changed accordingly. The variable of urban residence was used as a rough index of degree of exposure to these new socioeconomic contingencies. The results indicated that the importance of the ascribed "traditional" identities was in fact reduced in urban settings, but that the importance of achieved identities was not increased. However, the prediction that political identities would be more salient in less economically developed areas, because they represent the sole means of attaining significant upward social mobility in these areas, was supported.

The null results for the achieved identities is not terribly damaging to the social change hypothesis, however. Identity is not necessarily a homeostatic system. A reduced identification with one social group does not necessarily have to imply an increased identification with another to compensate. Perhaps the new, achieved dimensions of identity have simply not taken hold in the urban consciousness, or perhaps they never will; the decline of the salience of traditional dimensions of identity is still consistent with the present formulation of the impact of urban-industrial social change.

Another intriguing possibility is that individuals participating in "modern" social structures, in response to reduced identification with "traditional" social categories, may become more individualistic instead of simply identifying with other social groups. This assertion in fact received some small support in the present study, as the partial correlation between individualism and urban residence was significant, controlling for income, occupational status, and educational level, $r = .08$, $df = 572$, $p = .038$ (one-

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tailed). In a previous study of individualism-collectivism in Sri Lanka (Freeman, 1997) the same partial correlation (using a different measure of individualism) was much higher, and in the same direction, $r = .30$, $df = 387$, $p < .001$. This speculation is threatened somewhat by the failure to find significant negative zero-order correlations between the individualism index and the salience of traditional identities in the present study, but it does bear examination in future research.

Status inconsistency. The results were broadly supportive of the status inconsistency hypothesis as it was set forth in this study, which emphasizes the drive to achieve high self-esteem. A single high-status identity presents an opportunity to improve or "shore up" one's self-image, and is consequently emphasized in salience; a lone low status-inconsistency represents a taint on an otherwise positive self-image, and is de-emphasized. This hypothesis was supported for both caste and occupational identities, but null results were obtained for educational and class identities.

The post-hoc interpretation of these overall findings suggests that occupational and caste identities simply have a greater impact on self-esteem when they are inconsistent. It was also suggested that the highly significant effects of status inconsistency for caste identity derive in part from the fact that in the population this identity is simply more likely to exhibit extremes of inconsistency with other indicators of status.

An alternative status inconsistency hypothesis, the majority balancing hypothesis, assumes that the drive to maintain cognitive consistency is paramount. Within the present analysis, this would imply that single status inconsistent identities – whether high

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or low – would be significantly reduced in salience, as the individual attempts to exaggerate the degree of status consistency to escape the aversive state of cognitive inconsistency. Both the self-esteem and consistency models of status inconsistency theory, then, predict negative correlations between the salience of a low status identity and the average rank of one's other status-based identities: as one's status on other identities increases, a single low-status identity progressively becomes a greater threat to status-based self-esteem as well as cognitive consistency. But the models make different predictions in the case of those who possess high status on one identity. As the average rank of one's other identities decreases, the self-esteem hypothesis predicts that the salience of the high status identity will increase (yielding a negative correlation) as the individual tries to "shore up" overall self-esteem; the majority balancing hypothesis, on the other hand, predicts that as the average rank of one's other identities decreases, a high status identity represents a greater threat to consistency, and thus will be de-emphasized in salience (a positive correlation). Overall, then, the data in Table 10 clearly favor the view that self-esteem motives underlie any effects of status inconsistency on identity salience (cf. Hagerdoorn & Henke, 1991).

By the same token, the results call into question the central tenet of most extant formulations of status-inconsistency theory, that status inconsistency and role conflict are always highly aversive states, and that the motivation to somehow restore cross-situational cognitive and behavioral consistency is paramount. Although no data concerning "social stress" or any analogous variables were collected, these data support

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the view that status inconsistency can sometimes be a positive state, in that it permits the individual to claim the highest possible overall self-esteem.

In point of fact, much of the status inconsistency research was inconclusive to begin with, to the extent that it failed to reveal a necessary link between status inconsistency and psychological stress (Ashford, 1990; Seeman, 1977). Stryker and Macke (1978) concluded in their review of this literature that

> We cannot assume that expectations involving abstractly defined logical contradictions actually clash in the experience of those in any particular social locations, even locations in the stratification order that are the focus of status inconsistency work and that sociologists tend to believe are critical. (p. 82)

Rather than view status inconsistency as a psychological burden, the results presented here suggest that future theorizing should also examine how the possession of an inconsistent status influences the process of self-construction as it is guided by perhaps the most powerful social motivation of all: the desire to maintain a positive self-image.

Individualism. The results for the individualism-collectivism hypothesis were disappointing. Not only did the a priori hypotheses fail to receive support, but the observed pattern of correlations between personal identity and the social identities in the present study confounds any post-hoc interpretation as well. The most that can be said about the strength of the relationship between personal identity and social identity is that it differs according to the identity under consideration.

These ambiguous results highlight the difficulty of addressing this issue empirically, but research in this area should and undoubtedly will continue, since the

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nature of the relationship between personal and social identities within the self-concept remains one of the most important unresolved questions in identity theory (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Higgins, 1996; Reid & Deaux, 1996; Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991). Virtually all models accept that a distinction between self-definitions based on traits or personal preferences and those based on group memberships is necessary; what is at issue is how best to represent that relationship conceptually and, just as important, to measure it empirically.

As was discussed in Chapter 3, the model adopted within individualism-collectivism theory has the advantage of ease of measurement, but conceptually it is too simplistic in its assumption that social identities comprise a monolithic entity: the collective self. Deaux on the other hand (1992, 1993; Reid & Deaux, 1996), has used Rosenberg's (1988) identities by traits approach to develop a much more comprehensive model of personal and social identities. In her model, personality traits mentioned by respondents as self-defining (e.g., "active, confident") comprise personal identity, but are also enacted through the performance of specific social identities (e.g., "lawyer"). Both traits and identities are structured hierarchically in this model, such that the personal self-structure based on personality traits (e.g., "intelligent" is more comprehensive than "active, confident") can be directly superimposed on the social self-structure based on the corresponding social identities ("woman" is more comprehensive than "lawyer"). The complexity of the data collection techniques, and the general orientation of the model toward idiographic research, however, render nomothetic analysis incorporating social structural variables, such as in the present study, somewhat complicated.

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The present study approached this issue by assuming, as in recent formulations of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner et al., 1987, 1994), that personal identity was just another categorization of the self, no different in form and structure than that of any social identity. The relationship between personal and social identity within this model is group-specific. Categorizations of the self as an independent, self-reliant individual may be compatible with some social self-categorizations, but not necessarily with others. The relationship between personal and social identities within the self-concept in this model is determined by personal identity's proximity – along dimensions such as degree of salience, affective content, behavioral implications, or some such criterion – to the constellation of social identities within the self-concept.

The major difficulty with viewing personal and social identity thus as functionally equivalent self-structures is that of measurement. One can assess the salience of social identities, for instance, in a reasonably straightforward way by asking questions such as those in the present study about a particular social identity: "how important is being X in terms of how you think about yourself." But the same question cannot easily be used with personal identity. A large part of the problem is linguistic. The terms personal and social identity are manufactured concepts with very specific and distinct meanings in psychology whereas in the vernacular, the terms self, identity, personal identity, social identity signify different shades of meaning but are not fundamentally different. How, then, do you ask someone to think about their personal self as distinct from their social self?

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The present study resolved this dilemma by measuring the salience of personal identity on a different scale than that of social identities, and then assessed the proximity between personal and social identities on a group-specific basis, as the correlation between the two salience scores. It is difficult to know, then, whether the present study's failure to situate personal identity within the constellation of social identities in any meaningful way was due to the fact that salience was measured differently, or whether these two levels of the self are genuinely not systematically related to one another. Future research in this area using this model of the self-concept should as much as possible employ equivalent measurement strategies for each type of identity. Reaction times to social identity labels versus self-relevant personal traits represent one interesting possibility (cf. Brewer & Gardner, 1996).

Social contact. The dependent variable in research on group contact has historically been whether contact improves or worsens intergroup relations, whereas in the present study the dependent variable was identity salience. It was inferred, however, that identity salience usually implies the presence of negative intergroup attitudes based on the extensive literature linking social identification to a whole range of cognitive biases in favor of in-group members and disadvantageous to out-group members.

The present study supported the view that residing in a religiously and racially diverse environment – a "weak" or trivial form of group contact – was associated with an increase in religious and racial identity salience and, as the extant research allows us to infer, worse intergroup attitudes. On the other hand, more significant forms of intergroup contact – "spending time" with members of other racial groups, and "having close

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friends" from other racial groups – were both associated with decreases in the salience of racial and religious identities and by extension, more positive intergroup attitudes.

Two points about these findings deserve mention. First, the link between intergroup attitudes and own-group identity salience was entirely inferred from previous research. Future research, more directly focused on the links between different types of social contact, intergroup attitudes, and identity salience is necessary before any definite conclusions can be drawn. Second, as is the case with all the hypothesis tests in the present study, these data are correlational. It is actually most likely that the relationship between social contact and identity salience is a reciprocal one. Positive contact experiences reinforce positive intergroup attitudes, and this is consistent with the historical tendency to view contact as the independent variable, but these attitudes also make future significant and positive contact experiences more likely. Social contact is equally a dependent variable in this attitude-behavior relationship.

At this point it is difficult to imagine what course of action the central government might take to improve intergroup relations in the island based on these findings. Ongoing atrocities on both sides of the military conflict continually inflame racial and religious identities, limiting opportunities for positive intergroup attitudes or peace initiatives of any kind to take hold. The government's recent proposal to introduce a more federal system of government that devolves substantial powers to the island's nine provincial councils is one step towards ethnic separation, which represents one possible solution, since it would limit community diversity that, in this study, was linked with racial and religious identity salience and by extension worse intergroup attitudes. But such a

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solution would also limit the likelihood of positive, more significant contact experiences as well, which were negatively correlated with racial and religious identity salience. Clearly, the first order of business is to end the ethnic war, the single greatest impediment to the establishment of positive intergroup relations.

Multiple Identities and the Structure of the Self-Concept

Perhaps the single largest contribution this study makes to the identity theory is its consideration of the relationships between multiple identities within the self concept within a nomothetic research design. As noted above, with a few exceptions (Deaux, 1995; Wong-Reiger and Taylor, 1981), research on the structure of the self-concept in psychology has always adopted an idiographic orientation. This idiographic approach may be well-suited to clinical applications, but it precludes the possibility of addressing the questions that are of greatest interest to social psychologists, specifically, of how self-structures reciprocally determine and are determined by larger social structures and processes.

In Sri Lankan culture, the present study made the important discovery that organization of the self-concept is most powerfully structured by a higher-order distinction between collective and non-collective identities. The second important discovery was the unexpected finding that the organization of the self along this higher-order dimension and in terms of the clustering pattern of individual identities exhibited very little within-culture variability. Regardless of one's demographic location in the Sri Lankan social structure, the self is consistently organized in the same way, as depicted in Figures 6, 7, and 8.

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Despite this lack of within-culture variability in self-structures, the finding nonetheless suggests exciting applications for cross-cultural research. Different cultures should provide the necessary variation on the independent variable – social structures – as a basis for different organizations of identities within the self-concept. Some of these possibilities are discussed below.

Contribution to Cross-Cultural Studies

It is surprising how little cross-cultural work, or even within-culture work in non-western cultures, has been undertaken within the framework of identity theory to date, for the topic is one ideally suited to cross-cultural analysis. The basic processes of social identification and self-conceptualization are certainly cultural universals, and the concepts of "identity" and "self-concept" can be operationalized in a reasonably consistent manner across cultures. Moreover, because the theoretical framework is also flexible, it allows radically different identities and self-structures to emerge without sacrificing cross-cultural comparability.

As was shown in the present study, there is clearly a great deal of within-culture variability in social identity and the self-concept, but this theoretical framework does permit certain consistencies to emerge at the cultural level, as well. The overall salience hierarchy of identities displayed in Table 7 and the "averaged" self-structure depicted in Figures 6, 7, and 8 are two variables that can be compared across entire cultural groups. Even where different studies use different measures of identity salience, the rank-order of an identity in a salience hierarchy can be compared directly across cultural groups with an acceptable degree of equivalence, and then related to other culture-level variables such as

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GDP, level of urbanization, and so on. These intriguing possibilities await the attentions of future researchers.

Linking Individualism-Collectivism Theory and Identity Theory

Identity theory presents a much more refined theoretical framework than that of the individualism-collectivism dichotomy that has dominated cross-cultural theory and research in psychology over the last two decades. One of the most critical unresolved issues in individualism-collectivism theory is how the construct relates to specific social identifications. In early formulations (Hofstede, 1980; Hui, 1988; Triandis et al., 1985) the implicit assumption was that individualism was equivalent to a relative disidentification with one's social groups overall and collectivism equivalent to stronger social identifications. Later formulations (Triandis et al., 1988, 1990) argued that individualists have more group identifications, but identify less strongly with each one. Still others regarded individualism-collectivism to be group-specific, so that one could be individualistic with regard to one group, but collectivistic with regard to another (Hui, 1988; Matsumoto et al., 1996).

The present study linked individualism-collectivism theory and identity theory in an original manner. First, individualism was viewed as a "general" ideology, equivalent to a measure of the salience of personal identity. In the case of collectivism, however, a multidimensional measure was used, as the strength of social identification was assessed on a group-specific basis. The advantage of this framework is first, that it recognizes the multidimensional nature of collectivism and second, it does not assume that

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individualism (the salience of personal identity) is necessarily opposed to all forms of social identification.

The present study did fail to discover theoretically meaningful relationships between personal and social identities, but succeeded in generally establishing that the relationship is in fact group-specific (see Table 11). Even more important is the present study's demonstration of the empirical feasibility of a theoretical model that integrates these two literatures that have been insulated from one another for far too long.[17]

Culture and the Process of Social Identification

At the outset of this paper, the present study's model of the process of social identification was metaphorically compared to a game of cards. The cards in one's hand were compared to the collection of social locations defining one's place in the social structure; the rules of the game were compared to the larger sociocultural norms governing which identities are possible and desirable; and the strategies one employed within this set of rules was analogous to the psychological processes that determine how this collection of "objective" social locations is transformed into an organized and coherent set of subjective identities within the self-concept. It was noted that the variable of "culture" could potentially influence all three of these factors: the possible range of social locations, the norms governing how they are evaluated, and the strategies one uses to construct a coherent self-concept on the basis of both. By way of conclusion, we will consider each of these possibilities in turn, toward the end of suggesting some possible avenues for future research.

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Culture and social structure. Different cultures exhibit different social structures. In truth one of the major reasons western social scientists have ventured into examinations of other cultures is to understand how dimensions of social structure that have no analogue in western culture operate. Caste, for instance, is the single most explored topic in social science research on India. What has been less explored, however, is the manner in which these culture-specific dimensions of social structure are represented in self-structures at the individual level. This is where the identity framework can be of use.

Within the present study, caste represents culture-specific dimension of social structure and identity. The significant differences between the Sri Lankan and Indian incarnations of caste (see Chapter 2) prohibit meaningful comparisons even across these superficially similar cultural groups. However, within the framework of the present study, this dimension of identity is anchored within a model that also includes other identities that are constituted in a more or less consistent manner across cultures. With reference to these other, more culturally universal identities, some culturally universal features of this culture-specific identity may also be derived. For instance, in Figures 6, 7 and 8, and in Table 13, it can be seen that caste identity is closer in salience and perceived similarity to the "horizontal" collective identities nation, race, and religion than to the vertically integrated identities occupation, class, and education, as Silva (1992) notes,

> The institution of caste continues to be important in the social and political organization of the village, even though its present functions are radically different from what they were earlier....Caste is increasingly seen as a

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> matter of cultural heritage and personal identity rather than a mark of superiority or inferiority. (p. 90)

This type of approach to interpreting culture-specific dimensions of identity within a universal theoretical framework suggests a number of interesting applications for future research: language-based identities in Canada, regional (North-South or East-West) identities in the US, identities tied to participation in particular radical or activist groups, and so on. Again, the advantage of the approach is that the data it generates can be applied to within-culture analysis, but are also valuable in the search for cross-culturally valid theories of self and social structure.

Culture and social norms. Culture also determines the broader social norms that determine which constructions of identity are most probable. With regard to identity processes, one of the most important normative systems is a culture's degree of emphasis on hierarchical versus egalitarian modes of social relationship. In his groundbreaking cross-cultural study of values, Hofstede (1980, 1991) called this dimension of cultural variation "Power Distance."

Whatever the label used, on this dimension Sri Lanka would clearly be classified towards the more hierarchical or "power distant" end of the continuum (Gunasekera, 1994). Like many outsiders, on my first trip to Sri Lanka in 1991 from the relatively egalitarian culture of the US, I experienced no small discomfort with the implicit acceptance of privilege and social rank which formed a strong undercurrent to virtually every social interaction. My discomfort had very little to do with the actual degree of structural inequality in Sri Lanka (the United States exhibits some of the most extreme

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disparities of power and privilege in the world) but rather, with the pervasive acceptance and indeed active reinforcement of it at the micro-social level.

We might predict that individuals in such a hierarchical culture would be more willing to emphasize identities on which they are highly ranked, because they represent a socially sanctioned route to achieving a positive self-image. Conversely, in more egalitarian cultures, it may be predicted that this route to achieving a positive self-image would be used somewhat less, since such an emphasis runs counter to an egalitarian ethos. These data from Sri Lanka are certainly consistent with this hypothesis, since the self-esteem hypothesis received quite strong support in this hierarchical cultural context. It remains to be seen whether it would receive similar support in more egalitarian cultures.

A second cultural norm critical to the process of self-construction is the extent to which a culture emphasizes a multicultural, assimilationist ("melting pot"), or separatist orientation towards diversity. Sri Lanka is difficult to categorize along this continuum. On the one hand, the ethnic conflict clearly points to the prevalence of a separatist orientation. On the other hand, Sri Lanka is no stranger to cultural diversity: a small country, it is home to several major racial groups and religions, was governed by three successive colonial powers, and continues to be visited by a steady stream of European and North American tourists, businesspeople, and academics. Sri Lanka therefore probably ranks somewhere in the middle of this continuum.

In theory, we would expect that when a broad multicultural orientation prevails in a culture and in its national policies, ethnic, religious, or political minorities should be

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more likely to emphasize their identification with their minority groups. In the case of political identity, we saw that minority groups, specifically radical political minorities, emphasized their political identity more than did members of mainstream political groups. In the case of religious identity, the pattern was reversed, however. This reversal does not necessarily invalidate the proposed relationship between multiculturalism and minority group identity salience; perhaps cultural attitudes toward diversity differ according to which dimension of identity is under consideration. Racial and religious identities are bitterly contested in Sri Lanka at the moment, such that members of all racial and religious groups, whether in the minority or not, feel threatened. The relationship between broad cultural attitudes toward diversity and the degree to which minority and majority groups emphasize their racial or political identities merits further research, perhaps in less politically tumultuous environments than Sri Lanka.

Culture and psychological motivations. Most of the hypotheses about the salience of individual identities in this study make assumptions about the motives that drive the process of social identification. The self-esteem hypothesis, for instance, assumes that people are motivated to perceive themselves as powerful and good relative to others. The social change hypothesis assumes that people attend primarily to the identities that are most important within their local social structure. Perhaps the most consistent finding to emerge from cross-cultural research, however, is that constructions of self differ across cultures, in part because different social motivations underlie them.

Recent research with the construct of self-esteem in Japan (Heine, 1996; Heine & Lehman, 1997), for instance, suggests that it is simply not as powerful a motivation as it

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is in the United States. This research suggests that the need for positive self-regard is diminished and replaced by a need for viewing oneself as a useful, self-critical, and worthy group member. Within the context of research on identity, then, in Japan the salience of a group identity would in theory depend less on the status of that group within the larger social structure than on one's degree of commitment to and involvement in that group. In general if the motivational status of self-esteem varies across cultural groups, we might also reasonably expect that the capacity of the self-esteem hypothesis to explain the salience of individual identities will vary also (Kitayama et al., 1997).

Finally, cross-cultural differences in individualism-collectivism should also affect the strategies individuals use to construct the subjective sense of social identity. As an individual difference variable, being an individualist may impact the relationship between group distinctiveness and identity salience. Perhaps the reason the distinctiveness hypothesis was only weakly supported in these data from Sri Lanka was because Sri Lanka is a collectivist culture, in which group belonging is valued more than independence and "standing out from the crowd." Brewer (1991) suggests that certain group memberships and identities exhibit "optimal distinctiveness," in that they satisfy the universal needs for group belonging on one hand and individual distinctiveness on the other. Members of individualist and collectivist cultures may consider quite different levels of distinctiveness to be "optimal." In individualist cultures like the US, where the distinctiveness hypothesis was validated, group distinctiveness may encourage social identification, whereas in collectivist cultures such as Sri Lanka, it may inhibit such identification.

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NOTES

[1]This study focuses exclusively on identity among the Sinhalese, who are the racial majority in Sri Lanka, mainly because the majority of the Sri Lankan Tamil population, the largest racial minority in the country, lives in areas in which it is currently hazardous if not impossible to travel due to the ongoing civil war. There were also methodological reasons for limiting the sample and experimental design to a single racial group, and these are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

[2]I have spent nearly three of the last seven years as a resident in Sri Lanka, most of them as the spouse of a Sri Lankan, and so have had ample time and opportunity to develop these impressions.

[3]The terms "race" and "racial" are used in this paper because the terms "ethnicity" and "ethnic" in this cultural context lie at the intersection of racial, religious, and linguistic identities. The present paper regards these and other individual identities as empirically distinct, and moreover views the question of their interrelationship as an empirical issue. The term ethnicity is certainly more appropriate in the sense that it conveys the notion that such identities are always socially constructed, rather than biological, objectively observable "facts." "Race" and "racial" also have more negative connotations for US observers than "ethnicity" and "ethnic." Far from implying that race is exclusively and necessarily a biologically based identity, the term is used in the present context because it unambiguously distinguishes it from other identities such as linguistic, religious, or geographic identities. It will be understood in subsequent uses of the term that "race" incorporates real biological differences as well as the social construction of those differences.

[4]Although no comparative quantitative data for Sri Lanka actually exist at this time, this assertion is supported by analogy to other similar cultural contexts for which we do have comparative data, and by knowledge of the demographic correlates of individualism-collectivism across cultures.

[5]Many so-called "objective" social categories are far from that. Race provides a particularly salient example of a social category that it is impossible define objectively. Depending on the objective criteria one uses to delineate racial groups (skin tone, genealogy, physical features, and so on) single individuals can be classified as belonging to quite different racial groups. Despite these complications, in the vast majority of cases in Sri Lanka it is possible for individuals to unambiguously define themselves as members of one social category and not another, and so the use of the term objective is adequate for these purposes.

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[6]Different versions of the status inconsistency hypothesis abound in the sociological literature on the subject. Only this statement of the hypothesis is tested here.

[7]According to Ryan (1953/1993) the first three Sinhalese castes, the *Goyigama* (cultivators), the *Karava* (fishermen), and the *Salagama* (cinnamon-peelers), have nine, one, and two subcastes, respectively. But despite these exceptions, the general picture holds true: subcastes are nowhere near as numerous or sharply defined as in the Indian system. The *Ge* name in the Sinhalese social system is analogous to a sub-caste in that it they delineate family lines within the caste group, but they are not endogamous and only figure prominently among the more elite sections of society. In fact, the concept of the *Ge* name may be disappearing in Sinhalese society; I had considered including the *Ge* name as twelfth identity, but discovered in preliminary interviews that many middle-aged individuals did not know their *Ge* name, although they knew they had one. Those that did know all remarked that in no way did it impact their lives.

[8]During time I have spent in Sri Lanka, living in middle-class and some wealthy neighborhoods, by far the most common insult flung between neighbors or others of equivalent economic status is that another is "uneducated." Interestingly, such insults never involve economic class.

[9]Surprisingly, Sri Lanka's biggest export, in terms of money brought into the country, is labor. About three-quarters of these overseas workers are female.

[10]Several recent studies have in fact provided empirical support for the argument that, in the same way that Kerlinger (1984) showed liberalism and conservatism to be orthogonal ideologies, individualism and collectivism are orthogonal constructs (Freeman, 1996; Ho & Chiu, 1994; Kâgitçibasi, 1987a, 1987b, 1988, 1994; Kâgitçibasi & Berry, 1989; Kim, 1994; Mishra, 1994; Moghaddam, 1987; Schwartz, 1990; Singelis, 1994; Sinha & Tripathi, 1994) Unfortunately, no one has yet conceived of a way of integrating this insight into measures of individualism-collectivism that also incorporate the multiplicity of the construct in terms of in-groups.

[11]One hundred one (101) respondents failed to complete this section correctly, so the maximum sample size for any analysis involving data from this section was $n = 602$. Almost half (48) of these respondents did actually complete this section, but apparently assumed that, with six possible ratings and six separate questions for each identity, that they had to use each rating ("the most" through "not at all") once for each identity. The result was that every identity was rated of equivalent salience. The author discarded these data on the assumption that the respondents had misunderstood the instructions.

[12]During the design phase of this study, it was thought that these aspects of an identity might comprise orthogonal factors, and require separate analytical frameworks.

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As it turned out, all except the sixth item appear to be indicators of a single "importance" or "salience" factor for each identity.

[13]For Sinhalese Christians in the sample (valid n = 13), it is possible that a case of racial intergroup contact might represent in-group contact on the dimension of religious identity. Virtually all Buddhists are Sinhalese, but there are a fair number of Tamil Christians. Because different intergroup contact effects might potentially emerge for this group, Sinhalese Christians were excluded from all three tests of the social contact hypothesis.

[14]The highest possible occupational status receives a Z-score of 2.82 within its own (positively skewed) distribution, but in the (very negatively skewed) distribution for caste status, the highest caste receives a Z-score of only .49. Quantitatively this difference might imply a case of status inconsistency, when qualitatively the two identities are both high-status, and thus consistent.

[15]This ranking system does make the assumption that the intervals within the coding scheme for each identity are equal. Admittedly, this assumption is imperfectly met, since the original coding schemes were essentially based on qualitative distinctions. However, the coding schemes were developed with the ideal of equal intervals in mind, based on a knowledge of Sri Lankan social structure. Despite its limitations, this method provided the best possible framework within which to test the hypotheses concerning status inconsistency.

[16]The question of model evaluation is the greatest unresolved issue in structural modeling. Models that are "saturated," in which where every variable is permitted to covary with every other variable in the model, will always fit the data perfectly, but are theoretically useless. On the other hand, the "independence model," where all covariances are constrained to a value of zero, are conceptually most parsimonious but equally useless. In cases where alternate models are to be evaluated, we will wish to strike the best possible compromise between model parsimony and model fit. However, some measures only take into account model fit, such as the chi-square and the AGFI, and do not impose any "penalty" for model complexity. More complex models will always fit the data better, according to these measures. A range of other measures do impose some penalty for each increase in model complexity (each addition of a parameter to the model). The major undecided issue with these measures is just how much of a penalty to impose for each new parameter. The AIC, which imposes a penalty of 2 points to the chi-square measure of fit for each new parameter, only allows us to compare different models, lower values indicating a "better" compromise between parsimony and fit. The RMSEA is currently the most promising measure for providing an absolute criterion for model evaluation: when values approach or fall below .05, the proponents of this measure argue that an "adequate" compromise between model parsimony and fit has been struck. Hoelter's index, on the other hand, addresses another complication: the fact that larger

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sample sizes will always yield worse fit values than smaller samples sizes, when everything else about the model is held constant. He argues that sample sizes of 200 are large enough to evaluate the fit of a model using the chi-square index, and that if a chi-square value for a given model would have been non-significant at $\alpha = .05$ (indicating good model fit) at an N of 200 or greater, one should accept the model.

[17]Hinkle and Brown's (1990; Brown et al., 1992) study is another that makes a beginning in linking these bodies of theory. Their model, which was tested empirically, demonstrated that the strength of the relationship between in-group identification and cognitive biases favoring in-group membership was in part dependent on whether one exhibited an individualistic or collectivistic social orientation generally. Their model involved other variables as well, but their work was one of the first to empirically address the seemingly obvious relationships between the two literatures.

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APPENDIX

TEXT OF QUESTIONNAIRE

The English text of the questionnaire is shown below. The format (margins, spacing, fonts, etc.) differs slightly from that of the original version. Contact the author for a copy of the original questionnaire, which includes the Sinhala translation and original formatting.

This survey is part of a University research project. In order to save paper, there are two versions of this questionnaire: one in Sinhala/English, one in Tamil/English. You received the Sinhala/English version.

- We would be very grateful if you would finish this survey, but be aware that you are under no obligation to do so.
- If you do not wish to participate, simply return the survey blank.
- If you do decide to complete the survey, it is very important that you follow the instructions very carefully, one step at a time, and answer all the questions.
- There are no "right" or "wrong" answers -- answer only according to how you feel.
- Try to complete the questionnaire by yourself and in a quiet place as much as possible.
- You may respond in either Sinhala or English.
- Your answers will be kept completely confidential. You will not be asked to give your name, therefore even the University researcher will not know who you are.
- A few weeks after you complete the survey, you will receive a letter explaining the purpose of this research (by the same means through which you received this survey).
- We would welcome any other comments you might have about this survey. Please write any comments on the back of the last page of this survey.
- Thank you very much for your time, effort, and patience.

SECTION 1

Instructions: In this section you will be asked to answer some questions about how you think about the different labels that you might use or other people might use to describe who you are (in this questionnaire, the term "label" is used to indicate the different names you may use to describe yourself as a member of different groups. For instance, a person could be described using many names because he or she belongs to many different groups). ***Follow the instructions below carefully.***

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What is the ***highest educational qualification*** you have received? (In the box, write your highest school grade passed, or, if you have a University degree, state what it is)

Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?
2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?
3. How proud are you of having this label?
4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?
5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?
6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** education to how you think about them?

For the rest of section 1, the questions are written in a similar way, but please observe that they ask you to think about different labels, so your answers also will probably be different. Again, read the instructions carefully.

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What is your ***religion?*** Write your answer in the box. [ ]

Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

[ ] 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

[ ] 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

[ ] 3. How proud are you of having this label?

[ ] 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

[ ] 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

[ ] 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** religion to how you think about them?

What is your ***caste?*** (For example, Govigama, Vahumpura etc.). Write your answer in the box. [ ]

Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

[ ] 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

[ ] 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

[ ] 3. How proud are you of having this label?

[ ] 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

[ ] 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

[ ] 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** caste to how you think about them?

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Compared to the average Sri Lankan, what do you think is your ***economic class?*** (Please write one of the following in the box: *Very Wealthy Class / Somewhat Wealthy Class / Middle Class / Somewhat Poor Class / Extremely Poor Class*)
Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

☐ 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

☐ 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

☐ 3. How proud are you of having this label?

☐ 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

☐ 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

☐ 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** class to how you think about them?

What is your ***sex?*** (Write "male" or "female" in the box)
Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

☐ 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

☐ 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

☐ 3. How proud are you of having this label?

☐ 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

☐ 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

☐ 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** sex to how you think about them?

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What is the name of the ***town*** or ***village*** you are living in now? Write your answer in the box.

Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?
2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?
3. How proud are you of having this label?
4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?
5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?
6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** town or village to how you think about them?

What is your ***race?*** (Write Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, or Burgher in the box)

Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?
2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?
3. How proud are you of having this label?
4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?
5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?
6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** race to how you think about them?

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What is your ***age in years?*** Write your answer in the box. [ ]
Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

[ ] 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

[ ] 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

[ ] 3. How proud are you of having this label?

[ ] 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

[ ] 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

[ ] 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** age to how you think about them?

What is your ***national status?*** [ ]
Write "Sri Lankan" in the box.
Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

[ ] 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

[ ] 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

[ ] 3. How proud are you of having this label?

[ ] 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

[ ] 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

[ ] 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** national status to how you think about them?

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What is your ***political party?***
Write your answer in the box.
Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

☐ 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

☐ 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

☐ 3. How proud are you of having this label?

☐ 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

☐ 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

☐ 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** political party to how you think about them?

What is your ***occupation?*** (Please indicate specific profession) Write your answer in the box.
Look at what you wrote in the box as you answer the questions below. Use one of the numbers below to give your answer each time (*Write the number in the box next to each question*). You should give a response for each of the questions below.

1 = the most	2 = very	3 = somewhat	4 = a little bit	5 = not very	6 = not at all

☐ 1. How important is this label to how you think about yourself?

☐ 2. How important is this label to how others generally think about you?

☐ 3. How proud are you of having this label?

☐ 4. How powerful or strong does this label make you feel when you compare yourself to others?

☐ 5. How important is this label to your relationships and to the life you lead in Sri Lankan society?

☐ 6. When thinking of ***other people***, how important is ***their*** occupation to how you think about them?

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SECTION 2

Now, write the same labels once again in the appropriate boxes below:

1	2	3
your age	*your religion*	*your economic class*
4	5	6
your sex	*your race*	*your town/village*
7	8	9
your educational level	*your caste*	*your occupation*
10	11	
your political party	*your national status*	

If you think about it, some of the labels seem to be "similar" to each other, and other labels may seem to you to be "different" from each other. This part of the survey asks you to sort these labels into groups that appear to you to be similar to each other.
Follow the instructions below carefully.

Part 1:

- Now, think about the labels, and sort the labels into ***five groups*** so that the labels in each group are as similar as possible to each other.
- In the process of creating the five groups, you may create groups that have only one label or groups that have many labels in them.
- For example, in the process of making his five groups, one person might create one group with 2 labels, another group with 1 label, and another group with 3 labels, and so on.
- Finally, however, you must use all the labels, and you must create five groups.

Take your time, until you feel that your way of sorting is satisfactory for you. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Different people will have different answers. What is important here is to arrange the labels to best reflect the way you think. When you have finished sorting, write the labels in each group on the numbered lines below. Use the numbers written next to the labels above to give your answer (for example, 1 = age, 2 = religion, etc.). It doesn't matter which group you write down first.

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Group 1:____

Group 2:____

Group 3:____

Group 4:____

Group 5:____

Part 2:

The first part asked you to create five groups. For this second part, please sort the labels into ***three groups***, so that the labels in each group are similar as possible to each other. Follow the instructions as in Part 1, but this time you must use all the labels, and you must create three groups. When you are finished, write the labels you put in each group on the lines below. It doesn't matter which group you write down first.

Group 1:____

Group 2:____

Group 3:____

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SECTION 3

This section asks you to agree or disagree with several statements. For each of the statements below, please say to what extent you ***agree*** or ***disagree*** with the statement, using one of the numbers below. Write a number in the square next to each statement to indicate your answer.

1	=	I agree strongly.
2	=	I agree moderately.
3	=	I agree a little bit.
4	=	I disagree a little bit.
5	=	I disagree moderately.
6	=	I disagree strongly.

☐ 1. I enjoy being seen as a unique individual and being different from others in many ways.

☐ 2. My personal identity, independent from others, is very important to me.

☐ 3. I prefer to work alone, rather than to work in a group.

☐ 4. When I have a personal problem, I usually decide what to do myself, without relying on the advice of other people.

☐ 5. One should live one's life independently of others as much as possible.

☐ 6. It is always good to speak your mind, even if it makes someone else upset or angry.

☐ 7. When choosing a marriage partner, it is better to choose for yourself than to listen to what other people say about who you should marry.

☐ 8. I often "do my own thing" and don't pay attention to what other people think.

☐ 9. I like my privacy.

☐ 10. I am a unique individual.

☐ 11. When I succeed, it is because of my abilities, and not because someone else helped me.

☐ 12. It is best to be very direct and forthright when talking to others.

☐ 13. The groups of which I am a member are not very important to how I think about myself.

☐ 14. The most important thing in life is to arrange things to make oneself happy.

☐ 15. Newly married couples should always live away from their parents.

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Given below are several statements which ask about your ethnic identity as a Sinhalese. Like before, use the numbers given below to indicate to what extent you ***agree*** or ***disagree*** with each statement. Write a number in the square next to each statement.

1 =	I agree strongly.
2 =	I agree moderately.
3 =	I agree a little bit.
4 =	I disagree a little bit.
5 =	I disagree moderately.
6 =	I disagree strongly.

☐	1.	I have often felt that others discriminated against me because I am Sinhalese.
☐	2.	I participate in the traditions that are connected with being Sinhalese, such as food, music, and customs.
☐	3.	I often spend time with people who are not Sinhalese.
☐	4.	If I could be born all over again, I would not want to be born a Sinhalese.
☐	5.	I think that people exaggerate the importance of ethnicity in this country.
☐	6.	I don't participate very much in activities that have to do with Sinhalese culture.
☐	7.	I don't really think too much about the ethnic conflict in this country.
☐	8.	I am very happy to be a Sinhalese.
☐	9.	I am not very clear about what it really means to be Sinhalese in a society like ours that has so many ethnic cultures as well as "Sri Lankan" culture.
☐	10.	I often think it would be better if people of different ethnic groups kept to themselves and didn't have relationships with members of other ethnic groups.
☐	11.	I have not really spent much time thinking about what it means to be Sinhalese.
☐	12.	I think being a Sri Lankan is more important than being Sinhalese.
☐	13.	I have a strong sense of pride in being Sinhalese.
☐	14.	I am an active member of organizations or associations that are based on Sinhalese culture.
☐	15.	In meeting someone for the first time, I think that knowing their ethnic group is not very important.

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☐ 16.	I feel that the Sinhalese should have more representation in government than they do now.
☐ 17.	I sometimes wish that I could "quit" being a Sinhalese in the same way that people can quit a job or an organization that they don't like.
☐ 18.	I enjoy being around people from other ethnic groups and learning about their culture.
☐ 19.	I have strong opinions about what the government should do to end the ethnic war in this country.
☐ 20.	I have a very strong sense of an attachment to my ethnic group, the Sinhalese.
☐ 21.	I have spent time trying to learn more about my ethnic group: the history, traditions, and customs of the Sinhalese.
☐ 22.	I am extremely attentive to political changes that affect my ethnic group.
☐ 23.	All of the people I consider close friends are Sinhalese.

SECTION 4

This last section asks a few simple questions about yourself.

Question 1: What is you and your spouse's combined monthly income?
(*Please mark one of the following*)

☐ Less than Rs. 500
☐ Rs. 500 -- Rs. 750
☐ Rs. 750 -- Rs 1,000
☐ Rs. 1,000 -- Rs. 1,500
☐ Rs. 1,500 -- Rs. 2,000
☐ Rs. 2,000 -- Rs. 2,500
☐ Rs. 2,500 -- Rs. 3,000
☐ Rs. 3,000 -- Rs. 4,000
☐ Rs. 4,000 -- Rs. 6,000
☐ Rs. 6,000 -- Rs. 8,000
☐ Rs. 8,000 -- Rs. 10,000
☐ Rs. 10,000 -- Rs. 13,000
☐ Rs. 13,000 -- Rs. 16,000
☐ Rs. 16,000 -- Rs. 20,000
☐ Rs. 20,000 -- Rs. 30,000
☐ Rs. 30,000 -- Rs. 50,000
☐ Rs. 50,000 -- Rs. 100,000
☐ More than Rs. 100,000

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Question 2: How well can you speak each of the following languages? (*Please use one of the following numbers to indicate how well you speak each language. Write a number on each line. For instance, if you speak Tamil very well, then you would write the number "2" on the line next to "Tamil"*)

1. ____ Sinhala

2. ____ Tamil

3. ____ English

1 =	This language is my mother tongue.
2 =	I can speak this language very well.
3 =	I can speak this language fairly well.
4 =	I can speak this language, but not very well.
5 =	I can speak very little of this language.
6 =	I cannot speak this language.

Question 3: Here are some questions about the town you live in.
a) How many years have you lived in the town you live in now?

____

Write your answer here

b) If you have lived here less than 20 years, what is the name of the town or village where you lived before?
(*Leave part "b" blank if you answered more than 20 years to part "a"*)

____

Write your answer here

Question 4: Are you a member of any voluntary social groups? (for example, any women's organizations, religious societies, sports committees, etc.) If so, please write the names of these groups below.

____

____

____

____

This is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for your time and effort. Please place the completed survey back in the envelope. Seal the envelope closed before you return it. Everyone who has returned a complete survey will receive a letter explaining the purpose of this survey in a few weeks.

Thank you again!

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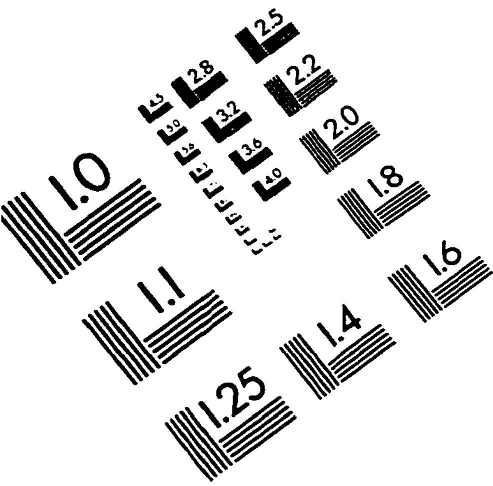
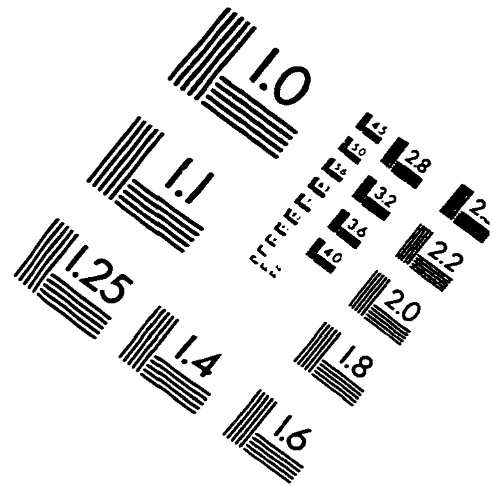
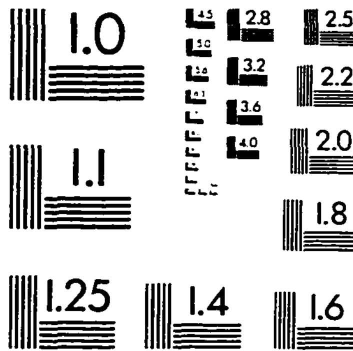
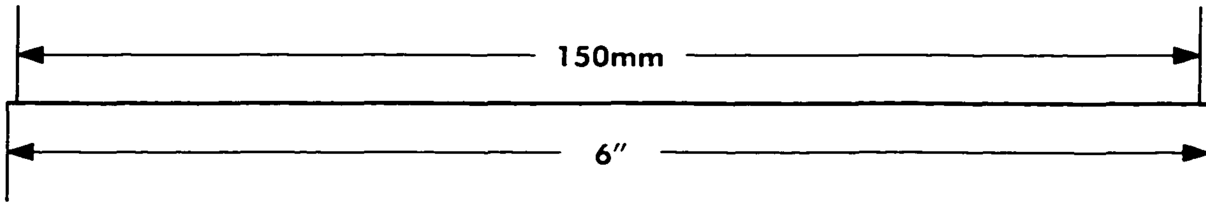
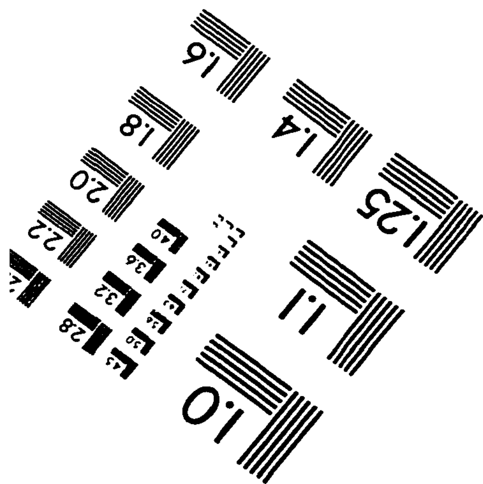
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)

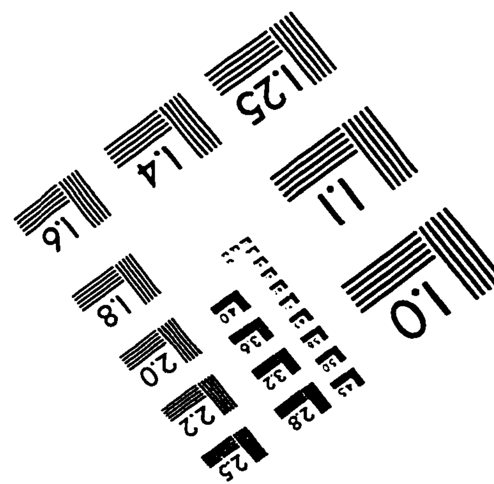












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