

Intergroup Sentiments, Political Identity, and Their Influence on Responses to Potentially Ameliorative Proposals in the Context of an Intractable Conflict

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Abstract

Two studies examined the association of particular sentiments and political identities with Jewish-Israeli students' responses to a generic plan to end the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and to narrower proposals for cooperative undertakings. Three composites—hatred/anger, compassion/empathy (reverse-coded), and guilt/shame (reverse-coded), and also a global composite combining these three sets of sentiments, were generally associated with negative responses to those plans and negative attributions about the wisdom and patriotism of supporters of those plans. Most of the associations between the global sentiments composite and the relevant responses continued to be statistically significant even after controlling for participants' political identity. The interaction between the relevant sentiments and the putative authorship of one of the proposals was also investigated. Issues of generalizability, replicability, robustness, and of the relevance of mediational analysis, as well

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as implications for conflict resolution and potential directions for future research are addressed in a concluding discussion.

Keywords

conflict, conflict resolution, Israeli–Palestinian conflict, peace agreement

Ever since William James's (1884) classic work on emotion, psychologists have explored the way in which emotions and sentiments influence attitudes and behavior toward others. For the most part, the emphasis has been on immediate emotional reactions, that is, discrete feelings associated with specific appraisal tendencies called forth by certain features of the situation which in turn potentiate flexible response sequences (Frijda 1986; Lazarus 1991; Roseman 1984; Scherer 1984, 2004; Smith and Ellsworth 1985; Tooby and Cosmides 1990). However, there has been growing interest in emotions experienced by individuals because of their identification with particular groups (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000; Smith 1993; Smith and Mackie 2008) including more enduring sentiments that have proved to be both prevalent and impactful in the context of intergroup conflicts (Bar-Tal, Halperin, and de-Rivera 2007).

Recent work by Halperin (2011) on the predictive power of an “ethos of conflict” suggested a mediating role of hatred and other negative sentiments in determining lack of openness to peace proposals in the context of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Our concern in this article is the extent to which these sentiments and other more positive ones exert an influence on responses both to broad peace proposals and proposals for more limited engagement and cooperation of the sort that build trust and pave the way for such broader agreements—including a possible influence beyond that predictable from the individuals' political identification on the “leftist” to “rightist” continuum.

Emotions, Sentiments, and Their Relevance to Conflict

Researchers and theorists have long distinguished between transient emotions occasioned by specific events and more enduring or chronic sentiments that persist in the absence of specific events (see Arnold 1960; Frijda 1986; Halperin and Gross 2011; Lazarus and Lazarus 1995). We suggest that the presence of particular negative sentiments and/or the absence of particular positive and moral sentiments can constitute a barrier to conflict resolution and reconciliation (see Bar-Tal, Halperin, and de-Rivera 2007; Halperin 2011; Maoz and McCauley 2005) that operates alongside and may serve to heighten, the more cognitive and motivational barriers discussed by Mnookin and Ross (1995) and Ross and Ward (1995). This suggestion follows in part from research evidence that particular negative emotions play a role in judgment and decision making (e.g., Lerner and Keltner 2000, 2001; Lerner et al. 2003; Opatow and McClelland 2007)

and could thus influence the way those engaged in intergroup conflicts respond to proposals designed to ameliorate or even end those conflicts.

The sentiment of hatred, which Allport (1954) defined as an “enduring organization of aggressive impulses towards a person or a class of persons” (p. 363) in particular has been shown to undermine sound judgment (e.g., Opatow and McClelland 2007; Sternberg 2005) and play a destructive role in the particular context of intergroup relations and perpetuation of conflict (see Halperin 2008). Research suggests that the effects of anger when it is a transient emotion can lead either to rejection of compromise or to constructive engagement (Halperin et al. 2011; Reifen-Tagar, Federico, and Halperin 2011), but when people claim their anger to be a continuing sentiment, its effects may be difficult to discriminate from those of hatred.

There is also some evidence that compassion and empathy (Tam et al. 2007), and also feelings of guilt and shame (Čehajić-Clancy et al. 2011), can motivate efforts at reconciliation and conflict resolution, or conversely, that in bitter, protracted conflicts, their absence can remove such motivation.

The sentiment of fear has yielded less consistent findings. It has been shown to increase conservatism, ethnocentrism, and intolerance (Duckitt and Fisher 2003; Feldman and Stenner 1997; Jost et al. 2003; Stephan and Stephan 2000), all of which impede flexibility and openness to compromise in order to end conflict. But there is evidence that under certain circumstances fear, and the specific threat that occasions it, can motivate people to reduce conflict and attenuate the relevant threat by offering compromises and concessions (Gayer et al. 2009; Maoz and McCauley 2005).

Political Identity, Sentiments, and Views about Dealing with the Other Side

In the present context, the terms leftist and rightist are essentially synonymous with positive versus negative views about broad peace agreements (such as the Saudi Initiative) calling for mutual compromise and requiring trust in the other side’s willingness to abide by the terms of such agreements. We assume that the respondents in the present research will display these views as well. Our interest is the extent to which the intergroup sentiments we measure in our two studies exert an incremental influence on the ways in which Israelis across the political spectrum respond not only to proposed broad agreements to end the conflict but also to narrower proposals for cooperation and contact that might benefit both sides.

The distinction is an important one. Disagreements about particular proposals to end the conflict and of those who endorse such proposals may reflect differing assessments about the trustworthiness of the other side and different strategic calculations about the long-term consequences of compromise versus intransigence. By contrast, disagreements about the desirability of cooperative undertakings that promise mutual advantage and of other undertakings that might improve intergroup relationships (and about the wisdom and even the patriotism of those who endorse

them) would seem to hinge less on strategic assessments than on more visceral responses to the prospect of engagement with the other side.

In the present research, we proceed from the further assumption, supported by prior research (e.g., Halperin 2008; Reifen-Tagar, Federico, and Halperin 2011) and by our own experiences in applied conflict resolution efforts in the region, that right-wing political identity is associated with sentiments of hatred and anger toward the other side, with relative lack of compassion and empathy, and also with the relative absence of guilt or shame about actions that have created hardship and suffering for the adversary, whereas left-wing identity is associated with both the positive sentiments of compassion and empathy and the moral sentiments of guilt and shame. The association of fear and anxiety with political identity, by contrast, is essentially an empirical question. These sentiments could lead to either leftist or rightist allegiances and to either eagerness or reluctance to engage with the other side.

Study 1 examined the association between various sentiments and responses both to a broad proposal for ending the larger Israeli–Palestinian conflict and to a narrow proposal for cooperation in the sharing of water rights. It also employed an experimental manipulation of the source of the narrower (but not the broader) proposal and an individual difference measure that probed beliefs about the fixedness versus malleability of group characteristics. The rationale for these inclusions is described subsequently. Study 2 offered a replication and extension of the key study 1 findings and is described after our report of those findings.

Study 1—Responses to Broad and Narrow Proposals in the Context of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict

In study 1, conducted in the late spring of 2010, all participants rated a generic proposal calling for difficult compromises on the part of both sides and made assessments about the supporters of such a proposal. They also rated the merits of a narrower proposal for mutually beneficial cooperation in the development and exploitation of water resources. Roughly half of the participants were told that the water-sharing proposal had been offered by the Palestinians and half that it had been offered by the Israeli government. This manipulation thus allowed us to investigate the phenomenon of “reactive devaluation” of proposals put forward by the other side as opposed to one’s own side (Maoz et al. 2002) and its association both with political identity and with potentially relevant positive and negative intergroup sentiments.

Summary of Research Questions

We assume and predict that relatively rightist political identification will be associated both with negative sentiments about Palestinians and with negative views about potential agreements and those who favor them—both in the case of broad agreements to end the conflict and that of narrower proposals for cooperation and contact with the Palestinians. Indeed, these political identities are largely defined by such

differences (Shamir and Arian 1999). In the case of the water-sharing proposal, we expect to replicate the phenomenon of reactive devaluation, but we have an additional interest in the way the responses of Israelis with differing political identities and intergroup sentiments might be influenced by the putative source of proposals.

We further anticipate that negative responses to potential agreements will be associated with hatred and anger, with lack of compassion and empathy, and with the absence of the moral sentiments of guilt and shame. Linkages of such responses to fear and anxiety, about which existing research is mixed and ambiguous, will also be explored. The extent to which the relationship between particular sentiments and responses to the various proposals remain statistically significant after controlling for political identity and vice versa is a further empirical question to be explored in both studies. In pursuing this question, however, we are mindful that intergroup sentiments influence choice of political affiliations and that political affiliation influences the views and the sentiments of peers to which one is exposed. The relevance of this complex reciprocal relationship to issues of mediation (and of statistics reflecting type and determine degree of mediation) is dealt with in a concluding discussion.

Method

The survey in study 1 was administered in the spring of 2010 to a sample of Jewish-Israeli business school students at a private Israeli college, in the context of a course on critical thinking. It was a time of heightened political concern for most Israelis, with fears about the future, reflections about the immediate past (including an incursion into Gaza after targeting of settlements by Hamas) and the history of past disappointments figuring in everyday discussion.

Participants

Our respondents ($N = 175$) included 105 males and 68 females (and 2 who did not indicate their sex). Their mean age was twenty-five, with a range from twenty to thirty-two. Within the sample, 0.6 percent (one individual) described his or her political identity on a five-point scale as *far left*, 12.6 percent as *left*, 38.3 percent as *center*, 38.3 percent as *right*, and 7.4 percent as *far right*. Five participants declined to respond to this item. Regarding religion, 59.4 percent characterized themselves as *secular*, 22.9 percent as *secular-traditional*, 12.6 percent as *traditional*, 3.4 percent as *religious*, and 0.6 percent (one individual) as *ultra-orthodox*.

Measures

Intergroup sentiments. The first items on the questionnaire involved “continuing feelings unrelated to any specific events”—that respondents experienced when they “think about Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza” each on a six-point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 6 (to a very large extent). The sentiments of interest

in this particular report (in the order in which they were presented) were *anger, concern, compassion, hostility, fear, rage, empathy, hatred, irritation, shame (regarding Israeli actions), anxiety, and guilt (regarding Israeli actions)*.¹

A principal component analysis including all of the sentiments of concern in this report, using oblimin rotation, yielded four components with Eigenvalues ranging from 1.16 to 5.47. All sentiments loaded $> .7$ on one of the components, while none of them loaded $> .3$ on any of the other components, producing a near perfect component solution. The components also made conceptual sense. One component (which we label *hatred/anger*) included hate, anger, irritation, rage, and hostility:² $\alpha = .93$, a second component (*compassion/empathy*) included empathy and compassion: $\alpha = .81$, a third component (*guilt/shame*) included those two moral sentiments: $\alpha = .89$, and a fourth component (*fear/anxiety*) included fear, anxiety and concern: $\alpha = .92$.

Malleability of group characteristics. An additional set of items probed respondents “theories” about the fixedness versus malleability of group characteristics (Halperin et al. 2011). Participants indicated their agreement, using a six-point scale (1 = do not agree at all, 6 = agree to a very large extent), to three “entity theory” beliefs (e.g., “each nation or group has fixed values and beliefs which cannot be significantly changed”) and four “malleability theory” beliefs (e.g., “groups often change their most basic positions on central issues”).³

The questionnaire then described two proposals.⁴ After each of these proposals, a series of questions is presented and described subsequently.

Generic peace plan proposal. The plan for settlement of the larger conflict was presented in the form of a list of provisions that, we noted, “many experts on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict agree” would have to be included in any possible agreement that the two sides could accept. These provisions included the recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, a return to the 1967 borders with mutually agreed land swaps, Jerusalem as the capital of both states and financial compensation of Palestinian refugees but no collective “right of return” (see the Appendix for full text presented to participants).

Participants were asked whether they would support the proposal if the Palestinians would honor it (1 = strongly support; 7 = strongly oppose); and how confident they were that the Palestinians would in fact honor it (1 = completely confident they would honor it; 7 = completely confident they would not honor it). They were also asked how they would characterize the political views of a third party who supports the proposal (1 = extremely pro-Israeli; 7 = extremely pro-Palestinian), how wise they would characterize a fellow Israeli who supports the proposal (1 = very wise; 7 = very foolish), and how politically sophisticated they would consider a fellow Israeli who supports the proposal (1 = very sophisticated; 7 = very naive). Participants were also asked how patriotic they would consider a fellow Israeli who would support the proposal (1 = very patriotic; 7 = very unpatriotic).

Water-sharing proposal. This proposal dealt with shared access to existing water resources and development and use of additional resources to be developed. Proposals of this sort, which have been put forward at various times and by various parties in the past, offer the possibility for mutual benefit in a relatively narrow domain without entailing obvious risk to Israelis. As noted earlier, to pursue our interest in the process of reactive devaluation and its possible moderation by various positive and negative sentiments, 87 of the 175 respondents were told that the proposal had been offered by the Palestinian Authority and 88 that it had been offered by the Israeli government. The full text of the proposal (which involved Israeli development of additional water resources to be shared in return for Palestinian agreement to continuing Israeli access to resources on Palestinian lands) is appended to this article.

Participants read the terms of the proposal and then rated “how good is the offer for the Palestinians” (1 = not good at all; 10 = very good), and “how good is it for Israel” (1 = not good at all; 10 = very good). A measure of relative benefit to Israelis versus Palestinians was created by subtracting the first of these measures from the second, yielding a scale ranging from -9 (much greater benefit to the Palestinians than to the Israelis) to $+9$ (much greater benefit to the Israelis than to the Palestinians). Participants were also asked whether they personally would support such an agreement and whether they would recommend that their government accept the offer, had they been in the role of consultant. The response scale for the items was (1 = definitely would support/recommend; 10 = definitely would not support/recommend). Responses to these two items, as one might expect, proved to be highly correlated, $r(169) = .77, p < .01$, and accordingly we use the average of the two in subsequent analyses. Participants were also asked whether the “average Israeli” would support the agreement.

The final items in the survey were questions pertaining to the participants’ political identity, as well as their level of knowledge about and interest in politics, and their religious observance. Only the item asking about political identity will be considered in this report.

Results

Our focal questions involved the extent to which various intergroup sentiments predict responses to the two types of possible agreements, both before and after controlling for associations with political identity. Before turning to those questions, it is worth noting the absolute levels of those sentiments, the relationships among them, and also their associations with relatively rightists versus leftist political identities.

As one might expect, given the hostility between the Israeli and Palestinian groups, the mean for hatred/anger ($M = 4.10, SD = 1.25$) and that for fear/anxiety ($M = 3.95, SD = 1.26$) were higher than the mean for compassion/empathy ($M = 2.75, SD = 1.20$). The mean for guilt/shame regarding past Israeli actions was lowest of all ($M = 1.71, SD = 1.01$). In fact, a slight majority of the participants (54 percent) reported feeling no guilt or shame at all. Correlational analysis showed hatred/anger

and fear/anxiety to be significantly correlated, $r(173) = .33, p < .01$, as were compassion/empathy and guilt/shame, $r(173) = .44, p < .01$. Hatred/anger was negatively correlated with compassion/empathy, $r(173) = -.51, p < .01$, and guilt/shame, $r(173) = -.35, p < .01$, while fear/anxiety was not significantly correlated with either compassion/empathy, $r(173) = -.05, p = .48$, or guilt/shame, $r(173) = -.05, p = .53$.

Correlational analysis also yielded the anticipated positive correlations between relatively rightist political identification and the sentiments of hatred/anger, $r(168) = .50, p < .01$, and fear/anxiety, $r(168) = .23, p < .01$, and negative correlations between that political identification and compassion/empathy, $r(168) = -.44, p < .01$, and guilt/shame, $r(168) = -.45, p < .01$. Interestingly, in this particular survey, we found that self-described centrists (those checking the midpoint on the relevant five-point scale) offered responses that much more closely resembled those of leftists than rightists. The lone exception was the sentiment of fear, for which it was the rightists rather than the leftists whom the centrists most resembled.⁵

Responses to the Generic Peace Plan

Correlational analysis revealed that personal unwillingness to support the “generic peace plan” was strongly associated with distrust about the other side’s willingness to abide by its terms, $r(172) = .44, p < .001$, but also with characterizations of fellow Israeli supporters of the proposal as lacking not only wisdom, $r(172) = .67, p < .001$, but also patriotism, $r(166)^6 = .54, p < .001$). These two attribution measures, it should be noted, were highly correlated, $r(166) = .63, p < .001$, despite the fact that, logically, the more one sees supporters as lacking in wisdom the less one should attribute their support to unpatriotic motives. Unwillingness to support the proposal was also associated with the characterization of third-party supporters of it as anti-Israeli, $r(172) = .31, p < .01$.

Association of Responses with Political Identity and with Particular Sentiments

Correlational analysis also revealed the expected linkages between respondents’ political identity and both their willingness to support the plan (assuming Palestinian compliance with its terms) and their trust that such compliance would in fact take place (Table 1). This result, of course, is what one would expect, given that the labeling of oneself as *leftist*, *centrist*, and *rightist* largely reflects the extent of one’s willingness or unwillingness to accept the compromises entailed by such a plan. Furthermore, the more rightist the respondents’ identity, the more negative the attributions they made about the wisdom/sophistication of fellow Israelis who supported the plan and (to a lesser extent) even the patriotism of such supporters (on each measure the mean response of centrists again was closer to that of leftists than of rightists).

Table 1. Correlations between Respondents' Political Identities and Sentiments and Their Responses to the "Generic Peace Plan" and to Its Israeli Supporters.

| | Support | Trust | Wisdom of Israeli supporters | Patriotism of Israeli supporters | Anti-Israeli views of 3rd party supporters |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Political identity | -.36*** | -.42*** | -.45*** | -.25** | .18* |
| Hatred/Anger (H) | -.38*** | -.52*** | -.45*** | -.27*** | .07 |
| Compassion/Empathy(C) | .41*** | .41*** | .43*** | .32*** | -.09 |
| Guilt/Shame (G) | .36*** | .44*** | .34*** | .18* | -.16* |
| HCG composite | -.49*** | -.58*** | -.52*** | -.33*** | .13 [†] |
| Fear/Anxiety | -.14 [†] | -.25** | -.16* | -.15 [†] | .05 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. [†] $p \leq .10$.

Finally, and most relevant to our present concerns, correlational analysis revealed the expected linkages between specific sentiments and willingness to support the plan and trust or distrust regarding Palestinian compliance with its terms (see Table 1). In the case of all sentiments except fear, there were also highly significant correlations with attributions made about the wisdom or lack of wisdom of supporters of the plan, and in the case of the hatred/anger composite and the compassion/empathy composite also with attributions about the patriotism of supporters. Associations between sentiments and attributions of anti-Israeli views on the part of third-party supporters of the plan were weak and not pursued in subsequent analyses.

In a post hoc analysis, we subtracted the sum of the compassion/empathy and guilt/shame composites from the hate/anger composite to create a global composite (HCG) of sentiments that proved to be strongly associated both with political identity, $r(168) = .59, p < .01$, and with responses to the generic peace plan—indeed more strongly than were any of the individual components of that composite (see Table 1). Further analysis (Table 2) revealed that in the case of all of the response measures listed in Table 1, the association between the relevant responses and the three-component HCG composite remained significant after controlling for political identification. By contrast, after controlling for the HCG composite, the relationship between attributions of lack of wisdom and rightist political identity was the only one that remained statistically significant.⁷

Responses to the Water-sharing Proposal

We note at the outset of our consideration of responses to the water-sharing proposal, the interesting finding that the association between our respondents' willingness to

Table 2. Associations between Responses to the “Generic Peace Plan” and the Hatred/Compassion/Guilt (HCG) Composite after Controlling for Political Identity, and Vice Versa.

| Relationship between variables | Support | Trust | Wisdom and sophistication of supporter | Patriotism of supporter |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| HCG composite × dv; control for political identity | $\beta = -.45^{***}$ $t(2,166) = -5.48$ | $\beta = -.51^{***}$ $t(2,166) = -6.62$ | $\beta = -.42^{***}$ $t(2,166) = -5.24$ | $\beta = -.30^{**}$ $t(2,160) = -3.30$ |
| Political identity × dv; control for HCG composite | $\beta = -.09$ $t(2,166) = -1.14$ | $\beta = -.11$ $t(2,166) = -1.47$ | $\beta = -.21^{**}$ $t(2,166) = -2.64$ | $\beta = -.07$ $t(2,160) = -.81$ |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. † $p \leq .10$.

support this plan and their willingness to support the generic peace plan failed to reach statistical significance either among participants for whom the plan was purportedly of Palestinian origin: $r(66) = .17, p = .17$, or among those for whom it was purportedly of Israeli origin $r(78) = .17, p = .13$.⁸

Association of Political Identity and Sentiments with Responses to the Water-sharing Proposal

To investigate associations between political identity and responses to the water sharing proposal, we performed a regression analysis with political identity entered as the independent variable, with responses to the water-sharing proposal as dependent variables, and with putative proposer entered as a dummy variable (Israeli authorship = 1, Palestinian authorship = 0), to control for its effects. This analysis revealed that the more rightist the political identity claimed by respondents, the less willing they were to support/recommend the proposal, $\beta = -.26, t(145) = -3.22, p < .01$. Similar associations with political identity were found for respondents' assessments of how good the proposal would be for Israel, $\beta = -.18, t(145) = -2.17, p < .05$, how good it would be for the Palestinians, $\beta = .18, t(144) = 2.19, p < .05$, and assessment of relative benefit (i.e., the difference between these two assessments). $\beta = -.21, t(144) = -2.70, p < .01$. The association between political identity and predicted support by the average Israeli was not statistically significant, $\beta = .14, t(144) = 1.80, p = .07$.

Upon examining the associations between the responses to the water proposal and group-based sentiments (again entering the relevant sentiments as well as putative proposer as independent variables and responses to the proposal as dependent

Table 3. Associations between Responses to the Water Sharing Proposal and the HCG Composite after Controlling for Political Identity and Vice Versa (study 1).

| Relationship between variables | Support/recommend proposal | Relative benefit |
|---|--|---|
| HCG composite \times dv; control for political identity | $\beta = -.40^{***}$ $t(3,142) = -4.35$ | $\beta = -.32^{**}$ $t(3,141) = -3.35$ |
| political identity \times dv; control for HCG composite | $\beta = -.02$ $t(3,142) = -.18$ | $\beta = -.02$ $t(3,141) = -.22$ |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. $^{\dagger}p \leq .10$.

variables), we found a negative association between willingness to support and recommend the water development proposal and hatred/anger $\beta = -.29$, $t(148) = -3.71$, $p < .001$. We also found a positive association both for compassion/empathy, $\beta = .38$, $t(148) = 5.08$, $p < .001$, and guilt/shame, $\beta = .34$, $t(148) = 4.43$, $p < .001$. Similar associations were found for perceptions of the relative benefit measure: hatred/anger $\beta = -.23$, $t(147) = -2.94$, $p < .01$; compassion/empathy, $\beta = .28$, $t(147) = 3.68$, $p < .001$; and guilt/shame $\beta = .30$, $t(147) = 3.89$, $p < .001$. As was the case for the generic peace proposal, no significant associations were found for the fear/anxiety composite.

When we combined these three composites to produce a single three-component composite, associations with these response measures were again higher than those found for any of the individual composites—that is, $\beta = -.42$, $t(148) = -5.67$, $p < .001$, for the support/recommend measure, and $\beta = -.33$, $t(147) = -4.41$, $p < .001$, for the relative benefit measure. Further regression analyses (once again with putative source of proposal entered as a dummy variable in order to control for its effects) showed that the associations between this three-component composite and both of the relevant response measures continued to be statistically significant after controlling for the participants' political identification. By contrast, neither of the associations between political identity and the relevant response measures continued to be statistically significant after controlling for the three-component composite (see Table 3).

Effects of the Putative Authorship Manipulation

Our analyses showed the predicted main effects of the putative authorship manipulation on willingness to support/recommend the proposal, $\beta = .18$, $t(148) = 2.28$, $p < .05$; on assessments of how good the proposal would be for the Palestinians, $\beta = -.24$, $t(147) = -2.98$, $p < .01$; and how good it would be for the Israelis, $\beta = .19$, $t(148) = 2.31$, $p < .05$; on assessments of relative benefits, $\beta = .26$, $t(147) = 3.22$, $p < .01$; and on estimates of support by the average Israeli, $\beta = .27$, $t(147) = 3.34$, $p < .01$.

Further examination of our data revealed that rightists, as one would expect, expressed relatively low levels of support for the putatively "Palestinian" proposal

($M = 4.22$; $SD = 2.34$). But they also expressed only lukewarm support for the proposal when it was attributed to their own government ($M = 5.29$; $SD = 2.44$). Leftists, as one would expect, expressed high levels of support for the proposal when it was attributed to their own side in the conflict ($M = 6.25$; $SD = 1.31$). But they also responded positively when it was purportedly proposed by Palestinians ($M = 5.85$; $SD = 2.59$), and presumably was seen by these leftists as a welcome sign of Palestinian openness to engagement. The group for whom the effect of putative authorship was most in evidence was the centrists. They alone offered considerable support for the proposal when they thought it had originated with their own government ($M = 6.35$; $SD = 2.20$) but little support when it came from the other side ($M = 5.33$; $SD = 2.45$) in the conflict.

When the putative source of the proposal was their own government, the centrists saw significantly more benefit to Israel than did either rightists or leftists, $F(1,78) = 9.31$, $p < .01$, and also saw less benefit to the Palestinians, $F(1,78) = 3.94$, $p = .051$, and thus perceived a more favorable balance of benefits for their own side in the conflict, $F(1,78) = 9.44$, $p < .01$, than did the other two groups. When the putative proposer was Palestinian, no such between-group differences were found for any of these measures.

When we looked for interaction effects involving particular sentiments, we found that the effect of putative authorship was weaker for respondents showing high levels of compassion/empathy, both with respect to their willingness to support and recommend the proposal, $\beta = .22$, $t = 2.07$, $p < .05$, and their perceptions of the benefits it offered Israelis versus Palestinians, $\beta = .26$, $t = 2.39$, $p < .05$. But in the case of hatred/anger and that of guilt/shame, none of relevant interaction effects reached statistical significance. Nor did we find any significant interaction effects involving the HCG composite. However, a post hoc analysis that considered only rightists and centrists—the two groups that showed a main effect of putative authorship on our response measures—did yield a marginally significant interaction effect between putative authorship and the HCG composite for supporting/recommending the proposal, $\beta = .22$, $t = 1.91$, $p = .06$, such that the effect of such authorship was attenuated for respondents showing relatively low hatred/anger, relatively high compassion/empathy, and relatively high guilt and shame.

Discussion

In study 1, assessments of the merits both of a broad proposal calling for difficult compromises to end the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and of a narrow proposal for cooperation in developing and sharing water resources reflected a combination of respondents' sentiments about the other side in the conflict and their self-ascribed political identities. In the case of the broad peace proposal, both political identity and sentiments also predicted the extent to which respondents attributed not only a lack of wisdom but also a lack of patriotism to supporters of the proposal. Would similar attributions of a lack of patriotism have been made about supporters of the narrow

water-sharing proposal—a plan that raised no obvious security issue and that held the prospect of improving relationships between the two sides? Unfortunately, we failed to include measures to answer this important question—a failure that we remedy in our second study.

The Reciprocal Relationship between Political Identity and Intergroup Sentiments

The three-component composite consisting of hatred/anger, lack of compassion/empathy, and absence of guilt/shame proved both to be highly predictive of responses to proposals relevant to the ongoing conflict and strongly associated with relatively rightist political identities. Further, the link between the composite and the responses to these proposals, remained significant even after controlling for political identity. The latter finding is important insofar as cooperative undertakings offering both face-to-face contact and the prospect of joint gains can be a step toward the development of less toxic intergroup relationships and ultimately toward trust about the longer term goals and intentions of the other side. Such trust by the larger Israeli body politic will be required for Israelis to support the difficult trades of concessions that must be a part of any agreement that will end the long-standing conflict. In study 2, we investigate responses to proposals designed to encourage the types of contact that could produce such trust, and their linkages to the interrelated factors of political identity and intergroup sentiments.

Responses to a “Palestinian” versus “Israeli” Proposal

As expected, the water-sharing proposal was assessed less positively when attributed to the other side in the conflict than when it was attributed to the respondents' own government. That the magnitude of this effect proved to be stronger for centrists than leftists or even rightists arguably reflects more about Israeli politics than the determinants of reactive devaluation. Those on the left, of course, responded positively to proposals attributed to their own side. But they were also inclined to respond relatively positively—in a sense, give the benefit of the doubt to—an offer coming from the Palestinian side, perhaps in part *because* of its source. By contrast, those on the right responded less than enthusiastically to a proposal attributed their own side, although not as negatively as when it was attributed to the other side—a result that we believe reflects their current opposition to virtually any engagement with the other side that might be a step toward a comprehensive agreement that they would deem unacceptable. In a sense, therefore, rightists do not perceive anyone that offers such proposals to truly be “on their side”. Centrists alone showed a dramatic difference in responses as a function of its putative source.

Our conjecture that the phenomenon of reactive devaluation of proposals offered by the other side—to focus on prospective losses rather than prospective gains, to make negative assumptions about the implications of ambiguities

and omissions, and otherwise be led to respond negatively—would be exacerbated by negative sentiments and the absence of positive ones received only limited support. While high levels of compassion/empathy did seem to reduce reactive devaluation, none of the other sentiments seemed to play a moderating role.

Study 2—Responses to a Proposal for Professional Contact and Relationship Building

In study 2, our main goal was to extend our initial findings by examining Israelis' responses to a plan that called explicitly for development of professional ties and a better relationship between members of the two societies, and by further exploring attributions not only of lack of wisdom but also of lack of patriotism. However, we also included a direct replication of our prior study of responses to the water-sharing plan, thus allowing us to pursue issues of reliability as well as robustness and generalizability. In this study, the proposals were always attributed the other side in the ongoing conflict.

Method

Participants and Procedures

A total of 172 Jewish-Israeli business school students (45 percent female; mean age 25) attending the same college as in study 1 and enrolled in a subsequent critical thinking course participated in study 2, which was conducted in the spring of 2013. The participants rated their political identity as far left (one participant or 0.6 percent), left (10.5 percent), center (39.0 percent), right (42.4 percent), and far right (5.8 percent). Three participants declined to state their political identity—two who evaluated the water-sharing proposal and one who evaluated the professional cooperation proposal. Most (65.5 percent) described their degree of religiosity as secular, although 19.0 percent described themselves as secular-traditional, 11.3 percent as traditional, and 4.2 percent as religious. Participants were invited to participate in an online study in exchange for course credit. Roughly half of the participants ($n = 87$) were randomly assigned to read and assess the water-sharing proposal used in study 1. The remainder ($n = 85$) read and assessed a proposal for professional cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians in city planning, education, health and social welfare, and business and entrepreneurship, which would feature meetings designed to advance common professional projects, strengthen the bond between Israelis and Palestinians, and enable the sharing of knowledge and expertise (see the Appendix for full wording).

Measures

Intergroup sentiments. The same four sentiment composites used in study 1 were created, again with very satisfactory α values: hate/anger ($\alpha = .90$), guilt/shame ($\alpha = .88$), compassion/empathy ($\alpha = .85$), and fear/anxiety ($\alpha = .88$).

Assessments of proposals. In the case of both proposals, participants were asked to what degree they thought the proposal would be good for Israel, to what extent they thought the proposal would be good for the Palestinians, to what extent they personally would support the proposal and recommend such support on the part of the Israeli government had they been in the role of third-party consultant, and to what extent they thought that the average Israeli would support the proposal. They were also asked to what degree they would attribute (a lack of) wisdom and farsightedness, and even (a lack of) patriotism to Israelis who supported the proposal. Despite the logical distinction between the two attribution measures, it is worth noting that the correlation between attributions of lack of farsightedness/wisdom and lack of patriotism proved to be high both for the water-sharing proposal, $r(85) = .56, p < .001$, and the professional cooperation proposal, $r(83) = .64, p < .001$. As in study 1, a final set of questionnaire items asked participants to report their age, gender, political orientation, religion, and degree of religious observance.

Results and Discussion

As in study 1, the means for the two negative sentiment composites (hatred/anger $M = 3.49, SD = 1.06$; and fear/anxiety $M = 3.94, SD = 1.12$) were higher than those for the compassion/empathy composite ($M = 2.74, SD = 1.15$) and much higher than the mean for the moral sentiments composite of guilt/shame ($M = 1.68, SD = .92$). In the case of hatred/anger, the mean rating in study 2 was significantly lower than it had been in study 1, three years earlier ($M = 4.10, SD = 1.25$), $t(345) = 4.90, p < .01$. The means for the other composites, by contrast, were very similar in the two studies.

Again, the hatred/anger composite proved to be correlated positively with fear/anxiety, $r(170) = .38, p < .01$, and negatively with both the compassion/empathy, $r(170) = -.36, p < .01$, and guilt/shame composites, $r(170) = -.26, p < .01$. Compassion/empathy was significantly correlated with guilt/shame, $r(170) = .58, p < .01$, but not with fear/anxiety, $r(170) = .01, p = .89$. Furthermore, as in study 1, relatively rightist political identities were positively correlated with hatred/anger, $r(167) = .49, p < .01$, although in this study not with fear/anxiety, $r(167) = .10, p = .18$. And these identities again were negatively correlated with compassion/empathy, $r(167) = -.46, p < .01$, and guilt/shame, $r(167) = .47, p < .01$. The correlation between political identity and the HCG composite combining these three separate sentiment composites was highly significant, $r(167) = .61, p < .01$, and also very similar to the correlation observed in study 1, $r(168) = .59, p < .01$.

Table 4. Correlations between Responses to the Water Sharing Proposal and Respondents' Political Identities and Sentiments (study 2).

| | Support/ Recommend | Relative Benefits | Wisdom of supporters | Patriotism of Supporters |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Political identity | -.32** | -.29** | -.38*** | -.23* |
| Hatred/Anger (H) | -.37*** | -.28** | -.35** | -.19 [†] |
| Compassion/ Empathy (C) | .28** | .10 | .26* | .20 [†] |
| Guilt/Shame (G) | .32** | .18 [†] | .33** | .14 |
| HCG composite | -.41*** | -.23* | -.39*** | -.23* |
| Fear/Anxiety | -.04 | -.02 | -.17 | .02 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. [†] $p \leq .10$.

Responses to the Water-sharing Proposal

As in study 1, political identity was significantly correlated with willingness to support/recommend the water-sharing proposal and with assessments of relative benefits to the two sides (in both cases with the association being slightly stronger than in study 1). Relatively rightist political identities were also associated with negative attributions about both the wisdom and patriotism of the proposal's supporters (see Table 4).

Our replication data with respect to associations between participants' sentiments and their responses to the proposal presented a mix of similar and dissimilar findings to those obtained in study 1 (see Table 4). In the case of the hatred/anger composite, as in study 1, there were statistically significant associations between that composite and both willingness to support/recommend the proposal and assessments of its relative benefits. Hatred/anger also proved to be correlated with attributions of a lack of wisdom, $r(85) = -.35$, $p < .01$, and a lack of patriotism, $r(85) = -.19$, $p = .08$, on the part of an Israeli supporter of the proposal—two measures that had not been included for the water sharing proposal in study 1.

In the case of the compassion/empathy and the guilt/shame composites, the replication findings were less consistent. Both of these composites, as in study 1, were associated with willingness to support and recommend the proposal (although, in the case of compassion/empathy, the strength of that association was markedly weaker than it had been in study 1). But in contrast to the case in study 1, neither composite was significantly correlated with the respondents' assessments of relative benefits to the two sides. Both composites were also associated with positive attributions about the wisdom of supporters of the plan, while the correlation between compassion/empathy and attributions of patriotism on the part of such supporter was only marginally significant. However, the correlations between the HCG composite comprising all three of these sets of sentiments and each of the four response measures were statistically significant beyond the .05 level (see Table 4).

Further analyses examined associations between response measures and the three-component HCG composite controlling for political identity and between response measures and political identity controlling for the HCG composite (see Table 5). The results replicated those from study 1 for the support/recommend measure. That is, the association between the HCG composite and supporting/recommending the proposal continued to be significant after controlling for political identity whereas the association between the response measure and political identity ceased to be significant after controlling for the HCG composite. However, in the case of the relative benefits and attribution measures, while the association of responses with the HCG composite ceased to be significant after controlling for political identity, so did the association of responses with political identity after controlling for that composite.

Responses to the Professional Cooperation Proposal

As had been the case for responses to the water rights proposal, rightist political identity was associated with reluctance to support/recommend the proposal and with assessments of relative benefits to Israelis versus Palestinians. It is worth noting again that respondents in general and rightists in particular assessed the relative benefits to favor the Palestinians rather than Israel (rightists: $M = -3.24$; centrists: $M = -2.18$; leftists: $M = -2.11$). But in contrast to the case for the water-sharing proposal, political identity did not prove to be significantly correlated with attributions about either the wisdom or the patriotism of those who support it (see Table 6).

Examination of the association between sentiments and response measures showed most of the relevant correlations to be similar to, and for some sentiments in fact stronger than, those reported for the water-sharing proposal in this study (see Table 6). All correlations between the hatred/anger composite and the response measures, including attributions about the patriotism of proposal supporters, were significant beyond the .05 level. The correlations between the compassion/empathy composite and all response measures except for patriotism attributions were likewise statistically significant. Correlations between guilt/shame and both the willingness to support/recommend the proposal and assessments of its relative benefits were statistically significant, but not the correlations between guilt/shame and either of the attribution measures.

As was generally the case for the proposals we have discussed previously, correlations between response measures and the HCG composite were generally higher than those for the three separate composites—highly significant for willingness to support/recommend, for relative benefits, and for attributions about the wisdom of supporters of the plan, but only marginally significant ($p < .10$) for attributions about the patriotism of such supporters. Regression analysis indicated that the relationships between the HCG composite and the support/recommend measure, the assessment of relative benefits, and the attributions about the wisdom of supporters of the professional cooperation proposal continued to be statistically significant after

Table 5. Associations between Responses to the Water Sharing Proposal/Professional Cooperation Proposal and the HCG Composite after Controlling for Political Identity and Vice Versa (study 2).

| | Relationship between variables | Support/ recommend | Relative benefits | Wisdom of supporters | Patriotism of supporters |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Water-sharing proposal | HCG composite \times dv; control for political identity | $\beta = -.31^*$ $t(2,82) = -2.45$ | $\beta = -.05$ $t(2,82) = -.36$ | $\beta = -.23^\dagger$ $t(2,82) = -1.78$ | $\beta = -.12$ $t(2,82) = -.85$ |
| | political identity \times dv; control for HCG composite | $\beta = -.13$ $t(2,82) = -1.01$ | $\beta = -.26^\dagger$ $t(2,82) = -1.92$ | $\beta = -.24^\dagger$ $t(2,82) = -1.86$ | $\beta = -.16$ $t(2,82) = -1.14$ |
| Professional cooperation proposal | HCG composite \times dv; control for political identity | $\beta = -.52^{***}$ $t(2,81) = -4.27$ | $\beta = -.41^{**}$ $t(2,81) = -3.22$ | $\beta = -.33^*$ $t(2,81) = -2.48$ | $\beta = -.24^\dagger$ $t(2,81) = -1.73$ |
| | political identity \times dv; control for HCG composite | $\beta = .03$ $t(2,81) = .23$ | $\beta = -.01$ $t(2,81) = -.09$ | $\beta = .05$ $t(2,81) = .36$ | $\beta = .05$ $t(2,81) = .34$ |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. $^\dagger p \leq .10$.

Table 6. Correlations between Respondents' Political Identities and Sentiments and Their Responses to the Professional Cooperation Proposal.

| | Willingness to support/ recommend | Relative benefits | Wisdom of supporters | Patriotism of supporters |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Political identity | -.28** | -.26* | -.15 | -.10 |
| Hatred/ Anger (H) | -.45*** | -.34** | -.25* | -.24* |
| Compassion/ Empathy (C) | .43*** | .32** | .27* | .17 |
| Guilt/Shame (G) | .23* | .26* | .14 | .04 |
| HCG composite | -.50*** | -.41*** | -.30** | -.20 [†] |
| Fear | -.18 | -.28* | -.18 | .01 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. [†] $p < .10$.

controlling for the respondents' political identities and that attributions about the patriotism of supporters of the proposal remained marginally significant after controlling for such political identities. By contrast, none of the correlations between political identity and the relevant response measures was even marginally significant after controlling for the HCG composite (see Table 5).

Responses to the items on the fear/anxiety composite proved to be predictive of assessment of benefit to Israel versus the Palestinians, but not of willingness to support/recommend the proposal or of attributions regarding the wisdom or patriotism of supporters of the plan. Regression analyses for the relative benefits measure showed that association between negative assessments of relative benefits and level of fear remained statistically significant after controlling for political identity, $\beta = -.25$, $t(2,81) = -2.39$, $p < .05$. However, the association between such assessments and rightist political identity also remained statistically significant after controlling for level of fear, $\beta = -.22$, $t(2,81) = -2.08$, $p < .05$.

General Discussion

Relatively rightist political identities on the part of our research participants were associated, in two separate surveys thirty-six months apart, with negative sentiments toward Palestinians and with negative responses not only to the type of difficult trade-offs that would be required in any settlement of the long-standing conflict but also to proposals for more limited forms of cooperation and contact. Rightists were also more inclined than centrists or leftists to doubt not only the wisdom of peers who support such proposals, but in the case of the generic peace proposal in study 1 and the water sharing proposal in study 2 (although not that of the professional cooperation proposal in study 2) also the patriotism of such supporters.

Particular intergroup sentiments proved to be similarly associated with responses to these proposals and their supporters. A composite of hatred and enduring anger

(sentiments we found in each survey to be strongly linked with a relatively rightist political identity) were consistently associated with negative responses to the proposals and with negative attributions about fellow Israelis who supported them. Associations involving the compassion/empathy composite and also those involving the composite of the moral sentiments of guilt and shame (both composites linked with relatively leftist political identities) were less consistent across studies and proposals. They were strong for the generic peace proposal in study 1 and also for the water-sharing proposal in that study but not for the same water sharing proposal in study 2. They were also strong for the professional cooperation proposal between professionals in the two societies. Fear was present to a high degree among our participants, and it was modestly but significantly correlated with a rightist political identity, but in the case of this sentiment, it was the relative absence of statistically significant associations that was most notable.

In light of these findings, we examined correlations with political identity and response measures for a single three-component (HCG) composite that combined the hatred/anger composite, the compassion/empathy composite, and the guilt/shame composite. This global composite proved to be more highly correlated with respondents' political identities than any of the individual sentiment composites and in almost all cases more highly correlated with our research participants' responses to the various proposals than any of the individual sentiment composites.

Furthermore, in most of the cases where the HCG composite predicted a given response measure before controlling for political identification it also did so after controlling for political identification. By contrast, only in very few cases where political identification predicted a given response measure before controlling for the HCG composite, did it continue to do so after controlling for that three-component composite. The only case where the linkage between political identification and a response measure continued to be significant beyond the .05 level after controlling for the HCG composite was that of assessments about the wisdom of supporters of the generic peace proposal, and even in that case the relevant beta value ($\beta = .21$) was notably lower than the corresponding beta value ($\beta = .42$) when we examined the association between such assessments and the HCG composite controlling for political identification.

In short, our findings attest to the fact that intergroup sentiments exert an effect on responses to conflict resolution or reduction proposals beyond any influence of political ideology. Israelis who share political ideologies but differ in their sentiments about the other side in the conflict are apt to differ significantly in their responses to such proposals, and those who differ in their ideologies but share sentiments are apt to respond similarly to such proposals.

Relevance of purported authorship of proposals. In study 1, we found that the effect of putative authorship on evaluations of a water sharing proposal proved to be greatest for Israelis who described themselves as centrists. While this result was not initially anticipated, we believe that it is informative about the current political climate in

Israel—a climate wherein leftists welcome proposals for cooperative contact regardless of authorship and rightists are relatively unenthusiastic about such proposals even when offered by their own government. Centrists, by contrast characteristically welcome projects and proposals that could foster better relationships, but have doubt about the motives or the other side and hence are leery about its proposals.

We also found some evidence of moderation of the effects of putative authorship by sentiments, such that the effect was greatest for respondents showing relatively low levels of compassion/empathy, and (at least among rightists and centrists) those showing an absence of guilt and shame and high levels of hatred and anger. However, the fact that rightists and other respondents showing that combination of sentiments were not particularly inclined to welcome proposals for cooperation and engagement even when they originated from their own government limited our ability to explore the role that sentiments play in reactive devaluation of proposals. Exploration of the ways in which not only reactive devaluation, but other psychological barriers to agreement (including dissonance, biases in recall and interpretation of the past, and a focus on justice rather than mutual advancement of interests) may be moderated or mediated by particular sentiments, remains a topic for future research.

Issues of robustness and replicability. When we undertook study 2, we sought primarily to extend our initial findings by examining responses of a sample of new participants to a proposal that would initiate sustained contact and cooperation between professionals confronting similar issues in their work. Such projects, some Israelis and Palestinians and many third parties believe, could pave the way toward greater engagement and understanding between communities that have become ever more estranged and isolated from each other. We included a second sample of participants who were asked to evaluate the water-sharing proposal primarily to see whether the association of negative sentiments with negative responses to the proposal would include questioning of the wisdom and even the patriotism of supporters of this proposal.

Most of the findings in study 2 nicely replicated and extended those of our initial study. This was particularly true for the associations involving the three-component HCG composite. However, a few findings for individual composites surprised us and make the task of offering a simple summary of our findings more difficult. Responses to a purported Palestinian proposal for professional cooperation provided evidence of the same strong links to the hatred/anger, compassion/empathy, and guilt/shame sentiments that we had seen for the generic peace proposal and water-sharing proposal in study 1. But in the case of the study 2 water-sharing proposal, while the same linkages to the hatred/anger composite were seen in both studies, linkages to the compassion and guilt/shame composites proved to be somewhat weaker and less consistent in study 2 than in study 1.

More research, employing a broader range of participants and issues, would obviously be required before offering anything in the way of definitive conclusions about issues of generalizability and robustness. In light of our present findings, however, it seems that while the presence or absence of hatred and sustained anger may be a

consistent predictor of how antagonists respond to each other's initiatives, a composite that includes positive sentiments, moral sentiments, and hatred/anger may be an even better predictor of such responses.

Issues of mediation. It has become standard practice to employ mediational analyses to try to clarify the relationship between different influences on response measures. We dutifully performed such analyses using the bootstrapping procedure suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008). These analyses, without exception, yielded results that were consistent with the results of the simpler regression analyses that we had used to examine associations between sentiments and responses measures after correcting for political identity and associations between political identity and response measures after correcting for sentiments. That is, the results of these bootstraps analyses suggested that sentiments fully mediated the links between political identity and positive or negative responses to proposals in cases wherein the associations between sentiments and response measures remained significant after correcting for political identification but not vice versa—which, of course, was the case for most of the analyses we performed using the HCG composite.

However, upon reflection, we feel that such statements about mediation are misleading. When one manipulates a particular variable that in turn influences several intermediate processes, these analyses are of course instructive. But in the present case, political identity and intergroup sentiments are inextricably connected and mutually reinforcing. One's sentiments influence not only party allegiances but also the media and pundits to which one exposes oneself, and one's party allegiances influence not only the information to which one is exposed but the sentiments and justifications for those sentiments expressed by the peers with whom one associates.⁹

Limitations and issues of generalizability. While our present findings attest to the potentially important mediating role of intergroup sentiments in determining responses to potential agreements, we must caution the reader that these findings represent the responses of what were essentially "convenience" samples—samples that were relatively homogeneous with respect to age, education, and socioeconomic status (SES); and insofar as leftists in general and extreme leftists in particular were relative few in number, also with respect to political views and intergroup sentiments. Nevertheless, the samples utilized in our study may be especially relevant insofar as their members are apt to be better informed and educated than the Israeli population as a whole. Moreover, because the surveys were conducted in the context of a course on critical thinking, the respondents were motivated to make assessments carefully, and to avoid potential displays of mindless conformity to peer views or short-sightedness.

Of course, it would be valuable to conduct a similar survey not only with a larger number and broader cross section of Israelis, and even more valuable to do so with *Palestinian* participants who vary in their political views regarding compromise and peace and in the sentiments they harbor toward Israelis. Equally valuable would be a

survey probing the sentiments that individuals on each side believe that those on other side hold about them, and the links between those beliefs and responses to potential proposals.

A more difficult, and in some ways more important, issue is the degree to which findings from the present study can be generalized to other negotiation contexts. Most relevant perhaps is the degree to which in other contexts, it is similarly hatred and anger sentiments of the sort attending the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, rather than incompatibility of interests and aspirations in those conflicts, that account for protracted difficulties in finding common ground.

Implications and directions for further research. The most obvious implication of our studies is that hatred and anger, and the absence of positive intergroup sentiments and moral sentiments of guilt or shame, may be an important obstacle both to the type of interest-based agreements that would benefit all concerned and to the type of relationship-building programs that can humanize adversaries and create the trust necessary for more comprehensive agreements. Indeed, trying to produce such agreement through careful crafting of efficient trades of concessions, without attending to relational barriers may be an exercise in futility. Firsthand encounters with the other side in contexts that demonstrate a capacity for mutually beneficial cooperation and trust regarding future intentions would be an obvious vehicle for overcoming those relational barriers. We hope that our present research prompt individuals on both sides of this and other conflicts to become advocates for such encounters and to explore ways to insure their effectiveness.

Appendix

A. *Text of the Water Resource Development and Sharing Proposal*

Less than two years ago, as part of the preparations for the Annapolis conference, a group of international mediators met to discuss various issues related to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. One such issue involved access to water. On the morning of the second day, a specific proposal was put forward by the Israeli Government (Palestinian Authority). The proposal included the following points.

West Bank area. The Israelis and the Palestinians will each continue to enjoy their current access to water sources around the borders between Israel and the Palestinian territories, including the Israeli wells located on Palestinian lands—sources currently supplying a large percentage of Israel’s water. Israel will dedicate for Palestinian use a portion of any new water supplies that it creates—enough to allow Palestinians to meet their current needs.

Gaza Strip area. In return for its use of current water sources and wells in Gaza, Israel’s government will assist in creating new water sources to alleviate the chronic

water shortage in the Gaza strip for a period of three years, starting right after signing the agreement.

General. In case of drought that reduces existing water supplies, both sides will make equal proportionate cuts in water usage to guarantee that basic needs are met for all.

Text of the Generic Peace Proposal

- Return to the 1967 border with mutually agreed land swaps Jerusalem as the capital of both states;
- Recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, an end to all territorial claims against Israel, and security cooperation against terror groups;
- No collective right of return but “fair compensation” to Palestinian refugees who lost their homes.

Text of the Palestinian Proposal for Cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli Professionals

A program will be established to promote dialogue and potential cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli professionals regarding long-term sociopolitical issues of importance to both Palestinian and Israeli communities. The main issues to be dealt will be (1) city planning, (2) education, (3) health and social welfare, and (4) business and entrepreneurship.

The participants in the forum will include respected and well-credentialed senior professionals, entry-level professionals likely to play important roles in the future, and also academics actively involved in relevant scholarship and research.

The program will include regular face-to-face meetings, a website for exchanges of information, and sharing of data, with special emphasis on aspects wherein activities or problems in one community are likely to impact the other community. In order to ensure good faith and progress in the program, all participants will be required to commit to complete transparency in sharing relevant information regarding internal documentation, government and agency regulations, and budgetary issues. Each side will nominate its participants and freedom of travel between Israel and the West Bank will be guaranteed for all participants (although both sides will be able to exclude individuals from the other side with a criminal record).

Half of the funding (50 percent) for this program has been guaranteed by an International Organization that seeks to find common ground between Israelis and Palestinians. The remaining funding will be provided by the Israeli government (50 percent). Palestinians will be required to pay only for their transportation to and from the meeting sites.

It is hoped that this program will not only lead the communities to learn from each other and coordinate efforts where cooperation would be to mutual advantage but also to strengthen bonds between the two groups of professionals and more generally

improve relationships between the two communities. Both sides agree to release to the public any documents or reports that result from the meetings.

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Notes

1. Respondents were also asked about their optimism or despair about the prospects of reaching agreement; but to shorten our report, we shall not discuss these questionnaire items, which pertained less to intergroup sentiments than more general feelings about the conflict. After responding to these items about enduring feelings, participants were further asked to rate the feelings they *currently* experience when they think about media reports of specific recent actions by Palestinians and Israelis. Correlations between ratings of these feelings and more enduring sentiments were extremely high (ranging from $r = .61$ for empathy to $r = .82$ for fear). In light of these very high correlations, and in order to reduce redundancy, we do not discuss analyses employing the former measures further in our report.
2. Consistent with our assumptions that enduring (as opposed to transient) feelings of anger and related emotions are essentially equivalent to hatred, we found a very high correlation ($r = .77$) between the single sentiment of hatred and the other components of the hatred/anger composite.
3. The items provide a single scale of relative entity beliefs about groups ($\alpha = .83$). We do not discuss findings regarding the association of this scale with the other measures in this study because they proved to be tangential to our primary concerns. We shall merely note here that beliefs that groups are malleable in their characteristics were endorsed more by leftists than by rightist and were significantly associated with the sentiments of compassion, hope, and guilt/shame, and with the absence of hatred/anger. The belief that groups are malleable rather than fixed proved to be significantly correlated with positive response to the generic peace plan and its supporters but not to the water-sharing proposal. A more detailed account of these findings, including pertinent statistics, is available from the first author of this article.
4. Participants were presented with the water-sharing proposal before the generic peace proposal. However, we present our findings for the latter proposal before those for the former in order to better highlight differences in the degree to which political identity versus sentiments predicted responses to the proposals and also because it is proposals for cooperation and contact rather than any proposal for a comprehensive peace agreement that we follow up on in study 2.

5. This particular pattern of responses, however, was not replicated in our second survey and, especially in light of the small number of leftist respondents in both studies, do not receive further consideration in this article.
6. Differences in degrees of freedom for different response measures reflect failures by some study 1 participants to respond to some items. The item for which such failures were most common was the one pertaining to attributions of lack of patriotism. (In study 2, we made sure that all participants responded to all items).
7. Analyses focusing on individual sentiments revealed that in the case of each of the separate components of that three-component composite the relationships between that sentiment and responses to the plan remained at least marginally significant after controlling for political identity. But, in the case of the individual sentiment composites, the link between virtually all of the responses and political identity also remained statistically significant after controlling for that sentiment.
8. Participants who could not recall the putative source (sixteen who had been told it was a Palestinian proposal and eight that it was an Israeli proposal) were excluded from this analysis and subsequent ones as well both because such awareness was required for us to address the effect of that variable and because failure to recall suggested a low general level of attention. The relatively high number of participants who were excluded on this basis suggests that the putative source of the proposal was low in salience relative to the information about the content of the proposal. Heightening the salience of putative authorship, and/or suggesting to participants that they should consider the implications of such authorship, might well have heightened the effects of this manipulation.
9. In light of our comments about the status of mediational analysis in the present studies, and in order to avoid lengthening the article, we have not included bootstrap statistics in our results section. However, we are happy to provide those statistics—that is, relevant beta values and confidence intervals for analyses using the HCG composite and also for any individual composite—for any colleague who directs a request to the first author of this article.

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