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Eran Halperin¹ and James J. Gross²

Abstract

Anger is one of the most common and destructive emotions in intergroup conflicts, frequently leading to an escalation of intergroup aggression. Prior research has focused on short-term antecedents of intergroup anger, typically using laboratory paradigms. We hypothesized that the long-term sentiment of anger (a broad predisposition that is unrelated to a particular action) would predict subsequent anger responses to provocation. We further hypothesized that this effect would be mediated by appraisals of unfairness of the Palestinians' behavior during the war—one of the core appraisal themes associated with anger. To test this prediction, we used a unique two-wave nationwide representative panel design ($n = 501$) conducted in Israel during the last war in Gaza. Results showed that the long-term sentiment of anger towards Palestinians (and not general negative affect), measured 13 months prior to the Gaza War, predicted participants' anger responses towards the Palestinians during the war. Furthermore, we found that the effects of long-term anger sentiments were mediated by the participants' current appraisals of unfairness Palestinian behavior.

Keywords

anger, emotional sentiments, emotions, intergroup conflict

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Long-term intergroup conflicts are saturated with negative emotions. These emotions are thought to play a central role in initiating and sustaining intergroup conflicts (Halperin, 2010; Halperin, Bar-Tal, Nets-Zehngut, & Almog, 2008; Horowitz, 1985; Petersen, 2002). Emotions felt during these kinds of conflicts often constitute a personal reaction to a conflict-related event that is experienced by other members of one's group, and therefore may be defined as group-based emotions (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000;

Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007; Yzerbyt, Dumont, Wgboldus, & Gordin, 2003).

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Group-based emotions are personal experiences that can be targeted at events, individuals or social groups (Iyer & Leach, 2008). Most relevant to the current analysis of anger responses during wartime are intergroup emotions—i.e., emotions felt as a result of belonging to a certain group, and targeted at another group (Bar-Tal, Halperin, & deRivera, 2007; Halperin, Sharvit, & Gross, 2010; Iyer & Leach, 2008; Smith et al., 2007; Smith & Mackie, 2008).

Although many different intergroup emotions play a role in intergroup conflict, including hope, fear, and hatred, anger is thought to be especially critical in the initiation and maintenance of intergroup conflicts (Bar-Tal, 2007). Given the human and material costs associated with ongoing intergroup conflicts, it is urgent that we gain a better understanding of the factors that give rise to anger in such conflicts.

Anger and intergroup conflict

Anger is thought to be elicited when an individual's (Roseman, 1984; Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 2001) or group's (Mackie et al., 2000) actions are perceived as unfair, unjust, and as deviating from acceptable norms (Roseman, 1984; Scherer et al., 2001). People who feel angry believe that urgent action is needed in order to correct the perceived wrongdoing, and may believe that their group is capable of initiating such corrective action (Mackie et al., 2000). This often leads to a tendency to confront, hit, kill, or attack the anger-evoking individual (Berkowitz, 1993; Roseman, Wiest, & Swartz, 1994) or group (Mackie et al., 2000).

A growing empirical literature, based on studies performed in real-world conflicts, supports these predictions. For example, researchers have found a direct association between individual (Small, Lerner, & Fischhoff, 2006) and intergroup (Halperin, 2010) anger and attribution of blame to the outgroup. Other studies have found that individuals who feel angry appraise future military attack as less risky (Lerner & Keltner, 2001) and forecast more positive consequences of such attack (Huddy, Feldman, & Cassese, 2007). In a similar vein, studies conducted in the US following

the 9/11 attacks found that priming of anger in response to the 9/11 attacks led to higher support for an American militant response in Iraq and elsewhere (Cheung-Blunden & Blunden, 2008; Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003).

To date, most studies of the antecedents of anger in intergroup conflicts have focused on the role of contextual factors (e.g., exposure to provocative events), or cognitive appraisals of specific events (e.g., construing events as unjust or unfair) as the primary antecedents of intergroup anger during war (e.g., Cheung-Blunden & Blunden, 2008). One crucial limitation of these studies, however, is that they almost always have been conducted in a laboratory setting and focused on short-term contributors to the development of anger. Despite the continuous nature of intractable conflicts, even studies that have dealt with antecedents of intergroup emotions in the context of such conflicts have not examined the potential contribution of long-term factors to the development of these emotions.

The role of long-term sentiments

Emotion theorists have long suggested that one important antecedent to an emotional response is the individual's enduring affective traits or sentiments (Frijda, 1986). Importantly, these long-term predispositions to respond with particular emotions are thought to be emotion-specific, and not the result of a general predisposition to respond with negative affective responses. Thus, Rosenberg (1998) suggested that

there is specificity in the threshold-setting function of affective traits, which implies that a particular trait would predispose someone to emotions that are congruent with that trait and not to trait-incongruent emotions ... Hostile people are not necessarily primed for negative emotions generally, rather there is some specificity with respect to the threshold for anger. (p. 248)

Although emotion theorists have focused on individual rather than intergroup emotions,

Halperin et al. (2010) recently introduced a framework for analyzing intergroup emotions in the context of protracted conflicts that emphasizes the central role played by long-term sentiments targeted at a specific group or object in shaping specific emotional reactions to specific intergroup conflict related events. This framework distinguishes between *emotions*, which are multi-componential responses to specific events, and *emotional sentiments*, which represent enduring configurations of emotions (Arnold, 1960; Ekman, 1992; Frijda, 1986, 1994). On this view, an emotional sentiment is a temporally stable, general emotional disposition towards a person, group, or symbol that is unrelated to any specific action or statement of this object (Halperin, 2010).

Halperin and colleagues' intergroup emotion framework postulates that long-term emotional sentiments towards the outgroup will influence emotional reactions to specific events via their impact on cognitive appraisals. In other words, this framework suggests that discrete emotional sentiment should determine emotional reactions to a specific outgroup-relevant event by influencing appraisals of that event. This framework is based on an integration of classical *appraisal* theories of emotions (e.g., Lazarus, 1991; Roseman, 1984; Scherer et al., 2001), with the more recent *appraisal tendency framework* introduced by Lerner and Keltner (2000).

In line with the approach presented by most appraisal theorists of emotions, our framework suggests that unique appraisals should lead to short-term discrete affective reactions. Yet, we expand classical approaches by postulating that specific long-term sentiments will bias the cognitive appraisals of specific events by activating a cognitive predisposition to interpret such events in a manner consistent with the appraisal dimensions associated with that long-term sentiment. That part of our framework corresponds with the appraisal tendency framework (Lerner & Keltner, 2000) in claiming that emotions can give rise to an implicit cognitive predisposition to appraise future events in line with the central appraisal themes that characterize the emotions (Han, Lerner, & Keltner, 2007).

Our framework broadens the appraisal tendency perspective (at least) in two aspects. First, while the affective phenomena that give rise to the specific appraisal themes are short-term emotional reactions according to the appraisal tendency framework, the current framework focuses on enduring emotional sentiments as determinants of unique appraisals. Second, while the appraisal tendency framework deals almost exclusively with the role of incidental and not integral emotions in shaping a person's evaluations of an unrelated event (Han et al., 2007), our approach offers an intermediate way in which sentiments that are on the one hand irrelevant to the new event (i.e., incidental), but on the other hand highly relevant to the generator of the event (i.e., integral) predispose individuals to appraise the new event in line with the old sentiment.

The present study

The goal of the present study was to examine the effect of the long-term sentiment of anger towards an outgroup on specific anger reactions towards that group. To address this goal, we utilized a prospective two-wave panel design, based on a nationwide representative sample of Jewish-Israelis that took place during the last Gaza War. The long-term sentiment of anger towards Palestinians, as well as other long-term sentiments (e.g., fear, hope), were measured one year before the war. These emotional sentiments were not directed at any specific event or outgroup's action, but reflected a general emotional tendency toward the outgroup (Palestinians). Then, during the Gaza War itself, specific cognitive appraisals and emotional reactions to wartime events were assessed. Since socio-political variables potentially affect cognitive appraisals and intergroup emotions (Halperin, 2008), we also measured participants' level of education, religiosity and political orientation as control variables. We also assessed and controlled for geographic proximity to the attacks.

This design—with more than a year between the two waves—enabled us to address limitations of prior laboratory studies and test the effects of short- and long-term factors on the evolution of

anger in real-life situations. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first attempt to use a prospective study with the aim of examining the effect of the long-term sentiment of anger on anger reactions during wartime. Our specific hypotheses were as follows: (1) The long-term sentiment of anger (Wave 1) would predict subsequent anger reactions (Wave 2) even when controlling for other anger predictors, and (2) the effect of anger sentiments on anger reactions would be mediated by appraisal of unfair Palestinian behavior measured during Wave 2.

Method

General overview

We employed a two-wave panel design in which the same participants were contacted (via phone) at two time-points. The first was in November 2007, and the second was in January 2009. The first assessment took place during a fairly peaceful period in which Israel and the Palestinians were involved in continuous peace talks. The second assessment took place at the height of the last "Gaza War" between Israelis and Palestinians. This war began after a half-year ceasefire between Israel and the Hamas movement ruling the Gaza Strip collapsed in December 2008 and missile attacks against civilian areas inside Israel intensified. Israel then launched a wide-scale offensive in the Gaza Strip that led to about 1,300 Palestinian casualties, 13 Israeli casualties, and mass destruction on the Palestinian side. The second assessment was made during this active period of fighting associated with Israel's offensive.

Participants

Wave I The first wave included 501 Jewish-Israelis (248 men, 253 women) who could be reached and who agreed to participate on a voluntary basis. The mean age of the participants was 45.5 years ($SD = 16.49$), and the distribution of main socio-demographic variables represented that of the Jewish-Israeli adult population at the time of the survey (Central Bureau

of Statistics, 2008). Regarding political orientations, 46.3% of the respondents defined themselves as Rightists, 23.2% as Centrist, and 18.4% as Leftists (12.2% refused to answer that question). Of the respondents, 23.6% estimated their family income as below the average in Israel; 22.2% earned the average income; and 37.8% earned above the average (16.6% refused to answer that question).

Wave II The second wave consisted of 201 respondents from Wave I (101 men and 100 women; 40.1% of the first assessment). Participants were contacted and re-interviewed a week after the outbreak of the war. It should be noted that during the war, some Israelis were recruited to reserve army service, while many others came under missile attacks or left their homes for other reasons, and therefore re-interviewing the Wave 1 sample was very difficult. Previous research suggests that participation rates between 30% and 70% are, at most, weakly associated with sampling bias (Galea & Tracy, 2007). Of Wave 2 participants, 45.3% defined themselves as Rightists, 22.9% as Centrist, and 21.4% as Leftists (10.4% refused to answer that question). Of the respondents, 24.4% estimated their family income as below the average in Israel; 20.4% earned the average income; and 39.3% earned above the average (16.9% refused to answer that question).

Measures

Wave I The long-term sentiment of anger on the part of Jewish-Israelis towards Palestinians was assessed by asking participants to use a 1 (not at all) to 6 (very much) Likert scale to rate their general feelings of anger towards the Palestinians (angry, irritated, and furious; $\alpha = .85$), unrelated to any specific event or statement. In order to test the specificity of potential sentiment-emotion links, the same method was used to assess levels of long-term fear (afraid, anxious, and worried; $\alpha = .83$) and general positive affect (empathy, hope, compassion, and optimism; $\alpha = .73$). Momentary

feelings of anger in the first wave were assessed by asking participants to what extent the recent behavior of the Palestinians in regard to the peace process made them feel angry, irritated, and furious ($\alpha = .80$). We also measured general unfairness appraisal, unrelated to any specific event (e.g., "The Palestinians' general behavior in the negotiations with Israel is unjust", "Throughout the years, Israel has done everything to achieve peace, but the Palestinians have responded with violence") ($r = .51$).

Given that previous studies have shown that socio-political variables are associated with long-term sentiments and emotional reactions of Israelis towards Palestinians (Halperin, 2008, 2010) we measured them with the purpose of using them as control variables: educational attainment (1 = elementary—5 = BA or higher); gender (1 = men; 2 = women); religious definition (1 = secular—5 = ultra orthodox); and self-definition of political orientation (1 = extreme dovish; to 5 = extreme hawkish).

Wave II All measures in Wave 2 specifically referred to the events that took place in the last days of the war. Unfairness of Palestinians' behaviour during the war, which constitutes one of the core appraisal themes associated with anger reactions (Lazarus, 1991), were assessed using the following three items: "Palestinian missile attacks on Israel are unfair and unjust", "Israel did everything she could to keep the cease-fire, but the Palestinians chose to break it" and "Although Israel tried to negotiate with Palestinians, they only understand the language of force" ($\alpha = .63$). Anger responses were assessed using two of the items that were used in the first assessment, but this time the questions referred to feelings towards the behavior of Palestinians during the war (angry and irritated $r = 0.42$). Finally, to distinguish among discrete negative emotions, we also measured fear appraisals (e.g., "the Palestinians cause existential threat to the state of Israel") and fear responses (afraid and worried; $r = .67$).

Procedure

Phone interviews were conducted by an experienced survey institute in Israel (the Machshov Institute) during one week in November 2007 for the first wave and during one week in January 2009 for the second wave. Interviewers were trained in telephone survey methodology and conducted interviews in the interviewee's native language of Hebrew or Russian [There are currently 1.2 million (16%) new immigrants from the former Soviet Union who speak Russian in Israel]. Questionnaires were translated into Russian and carefully back-translated. Interviews were conducted by fluent speakers of Hebrew or Russian. At the outset of the interview, oral informed consent was obtained. A random sampling within stratified sub-groups was used to obtain a representative sample of Jews living in Israel at the time of the survey. The order of questions throughout the questionnaire was counterbalanced, and there was no effect of order.

Results

Factor analysis

To examine the distinctiveness of anger sentiments versus anger reactions, we conducted principal component analysis with Varimax rotation and Kaiser Normalization. This resulted in two clearly distinct factors with eigenvalues > 1 : three anger sentiments items loaded onto the first factor (.82 to .88; cross loadings $< .19$), while the two items measuring anger reactions loaded onto the second factor (.78 to .87; cross loadings $< .25$). The two factors accounted for 72.83 % of the variance.

We next assessed the distinctiveness and latent structure of all three main measures in confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS software (version 7). We tested the fit of three alternative (but nested) models: (1) a one-factor model, in which the paths between anger sentiments, unfairness appraisals, and anger reactions were constrained to 1 indicating identical concepts; (2) a two-factor model, in which only the path between unfairness

appraisal and anger reactions was constrained to 1; and (3) a three-factor model, in which anger sentiments, unfairness appraisals, and anger reactions were distinct but correlated latent variables (the hypothesized measurement model). The fit indices revealed that the hypothesized three-factor model ($\chi^2(1) = .25, p = .62; NFI = .99, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00$) fit the data well and reliably better than the 1-factor ($\chi^2(3) = 10.98, p = .01; NFI = .87, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .07; \Delta\chi^2 = 10.73, p < .01$) and the 2-factor ($\chi^2(2) = 9.36, p = .01; NFI = .89, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .09; \Delta\chi^2 = 9.11, p < .01$) alternative models, suggesting that the tested factors are distinct, though associated with one another.

Preliminary analysis

To make sure that no drop-out bias occurred in the second wave, a logistic regression was used to predict attrition by sex, level of education, political orientation, religiosity, level of family income, and all emotional sentiments measured in the first wave (i.e., anger, fear and positive emotional sentiments). None of these possible predictors had significant effects. Comparisons of the respondents who participated in both waves of the study to those who only participated in the first wave indicated no significant differences in terms of all socio-political and emotional variables (all p values $> .45$).

Preliminary analyses also showed that levels of anger responses were significantly higher during the war than 13 months before the war. Levels of acute anger responses increased from 3.2 (1.62) to 4.21 (1.64), $t = 6.54, p < .001$. Furthermore, paired sample correlations showed that the correlation between anger responses in both waves was non-significant ($r = .10, ns$), implying that levels of anger responses are highly sensitive to changes in the context. Interestingly, at the same time, anger sentiment was positively correlated with anger responses measured both in the first ($r = .54, p < .001$) and in the second waves ($r = .34, p < .001$) (see Table 1 for all bivariate correlations among research variables).

Do anger sentiments predict anger responses?

To examine whether anger responses assessed during the war (Wave 2) can be predicted by long-term sentiment of anger assessed 13 months earlier (Wave 1), we regressed anger responses on long-term sentiments of anger, while controlling for fear sentiments measured in Wave 1, positive emotional sentiments measured in Wave 1, general unfairness appraisals measured in Wave 1, exposure to missile attacks (Wave 2) and a series of relevant socio-political factors (Wave 1).

As predicted, and as shown in Table 2, the long-term sentiment of anger was the only affective predictor of anger response. The fact that other long-term sentiments including fear and positive affect did not predict anger responses highlights the specificity of the association between the long-term sentiment and the emotional reaction of anger. Interestingly, general unfairness appraisals that were measured in Wave 1 did not have any effect on anger responses during the war. Finally, the analysis showed that, as expected, people with rightist political tendencies tend to feel higher levels of anger than those with leftist political positions. Yet, even when controlling for that important predictor, the effect of anger sentiment measured during Wave 1 on anger response measured during Wave 2, remained very powerful. Interestingly, level of exposure to missile attacks did not have any significant effect on levels of anger.¹

Do unfairness appraisals mediate the effect of anger sentiments on anger responses?

To test whether unfairness appraisals mediated the effect of anger sentiments on anger responses, we used structural equation modeling with latent variables, using version 7 of the AMOS program (Arbuckle, 2006). Variables measured in Wave 1 that were found to have significant effects on anger responses were specified as exogenous in the model; unfairness appraisals were specified as mediators and anger responses as dependent variables. To simplify the presentation, we removed

Table 1. Bivariate correlations among the study variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Anger Responses W2	—										
2. Unfairness Appraisals W2	.30**	—									
3. Exposure to Missiles (W2)	-.04	.00	—								
4. Fear W2	.22*	-.01	-.17*	—							
5. Anger Sentiment W1	.34**	.23*	.10*	.06	—						
6. Fear Sentiment W1	.20**	.19*	.09*	.15*	.58**	—					
7. Positive Sentiment W1	-.18*	-.28**	-.07	.06	-.24**	-.10*	—				
8. General Unfairness Appraisals W1	.15*	.29**	.06	.06	.36**	.32**	-.36**	—			
9. Religiosity level	-.00	-.19*	-.06	.01	-.24**	-.24**	.22**	-.21**	—		
10. Political orientation (left)	-.28**	-.32**	-.05	.06	-.43**	-.17*	.50**	-.39**	.38**	—	
11. Educational attainment	-.02	-.05	-.09*	-.05	-.19**	-.06	.08	-.07	.12*	.11	—
12. Income level	-.01	-.09	-.04	-.08	.00	-.06	.05	-.09	.19**	.15*	.13*

* Significant at the $p < .05$ level; ** Significant at the $p < .0001$ level (two-tailed significance).

from Figure 1 all control variables although they were taken into account in the analysis. Importantly, similar patterns of results were accepted with and without the incorporation of socio-political control variables into the model.

Our hypothesized model fitted the data very well, $\chi^2(23) = 21.85, p = .53; NFI = .98, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .00$. Standardized parameter estimates are presented in Figure 1. The only control variable that had significant association with unfairness appraisals was Rightist political orientation ($\beta = .23, p < .001$). As expected, anger sentiment assessed in Wave 1 was positively associated with unfairness appraisals measured in Wave 2 ($\beta = .24, p < .01$), which in turn predicted anger responses in Wave 2 ($\beta = .28, p < .01$). In other words, anger sentiment predicted anger responses through the mediation of unfairness appraisals, Sobel test: $z = 2.80; p < .01$.

In addition, the anger sentiment directly increased levels of anger responses ($\beta = .40,$

$p < .001$). Removal of the direct path between the anger sentiment and anger responses, leaving only the mediated path, significantly decreased all fit measures ($\chi^2(24) = 38.64, p = .03; NFI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .04$) and therefore the two optional routes for the influence of anger sentiment on anger responses were integrated in the same model.

In the final step, we compared the fit measures of the tested model with the fit measures of an alternative model in which we reversed the causal direction between anger reaction and unfairness appraisals, namely, anger reaction mediated the affect of anger sentiment on unfairness appraisals. Although fit measures of the alternative model were reasonable ($\chi^2(23) = 42.55, p = .01; NFI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .04$) their fit to the data was significantly ($p < .001$) lower than the one of the hypothesized model. Overall, then, our hypothesized model received strong support.

Table 2. Effects of long-term sentiments (W1) on anger responses during the war

	Anger responses (Wave 2)		
	β	SE B	B
Long-term sentiments			
Anger sentiment	.37	.10	.36***
Fear sentiment	-.00	.10	-.00
Positive sentiment	.05	.12	.03
Control variables			
Education	.04	.07	.04
Gender	-.27	.24	-.09
Religious conviction	.14	.09	.12
Political stand	-.25	.10	-.22**
Exposure to missiles (W2)	-.08	.38	-.02
General unfairness appraisals (W1)	-.06	.10	-.05
R ² (Adjusted)	.18 (.14)		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Discussion

What predicts intergroup anger responses during conflicts? To answer this question, we focused on the ‘‘Gaza War’’ between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle-East, and examined the affects of long- and short-term factors on the generation of anger reactions during the war. Our study yielded two key findings. The first was that long-term anger assessed 13 months prior to the Gaza War was the most important predictor of anger responses during the war. The second key finding was that the effect of anger sentiment on anger responses during the war was mediated by specific anger related appraisals (the unfairness

appraisal), supporting the theoretical frameworks presented by Halperin et al. (2010).

Interestingly, these results held true even when controlling for relevant short-term factors such as exposure to missiles or appraisal of Palestinians’ behavior at that time. Other long-term emotional sentiments such as fear or positive affect did not have influence on anger reaction during the war. In addition, anger responses during the war were not affected by general unfairness appraisals. That finding rules out a possible alternative explanation of the results, according to which the effect of long-term sentiment of anger on anger response can be the result of persistent anger associated appraisals (unfairness) and not necessarily of the long-term affect itself.

Implications for our understanding of emotion generation

Our results lend empirical support to previous theoretical arguments suggesting that there are close and specific associations between long-term affective phenomena and short-term emotional reactions (Frijda, 1986; Rosenberg, 1998). Yet, while most previous studies have concentrated on the role of affective traits in the process of emotion generation (Gross, Sutton, & Ketelaar, 1998), the current study suggests that long-term sentiments should also be taken into account at least when dealing with long-term inter-personal or intergroup relations. It can be assumed that in these kinds of relations the specific long-term feelings targeted at the other person or group

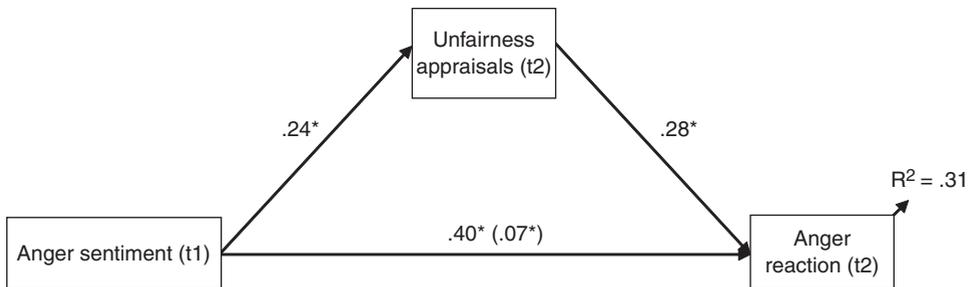


Figure 1. Unfairness appraisals mediate the effect of the long-term sentiment of anger on anger responses. Results from a Structural Equation Model (Sobel test: $z = 2.80$; $p < .01$).

plays a role in the emotion generation process above and beyond the role played by untargeted mood or by one's own affective traits.

The results of the current study suggest that when studying long-term intergroup relationships, scholars should not limit their investigations of emotion generation processes only to the time-frame starting after the outbreak of the event. Such intergroup relations carry with them a long history of positive and negative encounters that in many cases are affectively charged. That affectively loaded history leads to the consolidation of discrete sentiments targeted at the outgroup, its leaders or symbols. Our unique design enabled us to illuminate the central role played by these long-term sentiments in shaping specific emotional responses to provocative events. The variation in the experience of these sentiments contributes to the understanding of how different individuals who went through similar events interpret them differently and experience a different quality and intensity of emotional responses.

Implications for the understanding of intergroup relations and conflicts

The attempt to integrate short- and long-term affective factors in the same model is highly relevant to long-term intractable conflicts like the one currently unfolding in the Middle-East. Interestingly, while most psychologists who study emotions experimentally focus on phenomena measured in very short periods of time (i.e., seconds or minutes), scholars who study intergroup conflicts treat emotions as enduring for months and years (e.g., Bar-Tal, 2007; de-Rivera & Paez, 2007).

According to scholars of intractable conflicts, the long-term negative emotions are part of the psychological repertoire that maintains and facilitates the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007). The current study provides a better understanding of how exactly that repertoire operates, by demonstrating how emotional sentiments amplify their corresponding emotional responses and in this way, maintain the never-ending vicious cycle.

Long-term emotional sentiments also may have a meaningful effect on other aspects of intergroup relations outside the context of long-term, intractable conflicts. Given rapidly developing research on the role of group-based moral emotions (e.g., group-based guilt, group-based shame) in promoting conciliatory actions between previously conflictual groups (e.g., Wohl & Branscombe, 2008), it might be interesting to examine the potential role played by the enduring configurations of these emotions, in these very same processes. Another notable example is long-term sentiment of intergroup hatred that can potentially amplify held stereotypes and prejudice and lead to discrimination exclusionism and political intolerance (e.g., Halperin, Canetti-Nisim, & Hirsch-Hoefler, 2009).

With respect to anger, incorporation of the concept of long-term sentiment of anger into the extensively developed literature on collective action (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001) can potentially contribute to address the not yet resolved question about the long-term effect of anger on collective action. In many ways, long-term sentiment of group-based anger encapsulates most of the factors that are commonly mentioned in the collective action literature as collective action antecedents—i.e., perceived injustice/unfairness, group efficacy, and group identity (Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). Hence, it seems that the examination of the interactive effect of the long- and short-term configurations of anger can further contribute to our understanding of psychological dynamic leading to collective action.

Limitations and future directions

In many ways, the limitations of the current study arise naturally from the innovative design used in this study. Assessments conducted in the setting of real-world conflict, especially during such a horrible war, inherently includes error variance that is minimized in a laboratory setting. On the other hand, no laboratory setting can recreate emotionally charged situations like war. Therefore, acknowledging the value of both approaches (i.e.,

laboratory experiments and real-world field assessments), we believe that our intergroup emotion framework should be tested in the future under more controlled laboratory conditions. Congruent findings from these two different settings would provide important additional support to our proposed theoretical framework.

A more concrete limitation of the current study is that the anger appraisal measures that were used in both waves captured only one anger-related appraisal theme (the unfairness theme), and did not assess other relevant anger appraisal themes such as high control or outgroup blame attribution. Hence, it may be that the reason partial (and not full) mediation was found is that other anger associated appraisals have not been assessed. The fact that the mediation path turned out to be significant in spite of these limitations, further strengthens our basic approach.

Concluding comment

Negative intergroup emotions such as anger can have destructive effects in any context, but particularly in the context of intergroup aggressive behavior. Given that emotions are so powerful in these situations, their effective regulation is one of the most important challenges facing any group or society. Yet, regulation of high levels of anger in the midst of ongoing war might be a very difficult task. Results of the current study suggest an alternative avenue of emotion regulation that we have previously defined as *prospective emotion regulation*, namely, making effort to down-regulate long-term sentiments of anger prior to the anger evoking event, in order to tone down anger reactions during that event (Halperin et al., 2010). Although this task will clearly not be easy, given the stakes, we believe it is well worth trying.

Note

- 1 That finding corresponds with previous findings about the lack of direct effect of exposure to terror or missiles on intergroup emotions and attitudes in the context of long-term conflict and repeated exposures to attacks (e.g., Canetti-Nisim, Halperin, Sharvit, & Hobfoll, 2009). One explanation may be

the resilience citizens in these areas develop throughout the years and the other is that in such small communities (like the Israeli society) the indirect exposure yields an almost equal affect as the direct one.

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