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# Group-based Hatred in Intractable Conflict in Israel

Eran Halperin

*School of Political Science*

*University of Haifa, Israel*

Countless theoretical texts have been written regarding the centrality of hatred as a force that motivates intergroup conflicts. However, surprisingly, at present, almost no empirical study has been conducted either on the nature and character of group-based hatred or on its implications for conflicts. Therefore, the goal of the current work has been to examine the nature of group-based hatred in conflicts. Three studies were conducted within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The first was a qualitative study, which aimed at creating a preliminary platform for investigation of specific features of group-based hatred. Studies 2 and 3 used various scenarios and survey methods to indicate the appraisal and the behavioral aspects of group-based hatred and to distill them from those of other negative emotions, such as anger or fear. In general, results show that hatred is a distinct emotion that includes a unique cognitive-appraisal component and specific emotional goals.

**Keywords:** *group-based hatred; appraisals; emotional goals; intractable conflict*

Since the early 1980s, social scientists have acknowledged the centrality of emotions in all aspects of human life and particularly in social and political realms (see Frijda 1986; de Rivera 1992). This has led to the examination of emotions in intergroup relations (Stephan and Stephan 1985; Mackie, Devos, and Smith, 2000). Countless theoretical texts have been written regarding the centrality of negative emotions as a force that motivates and sustains conflicts between societies and countries (e.g., Volkan 1997; Petersen 2002; Staub 2005). Recently, Bar-Tal (2007) has pointed to three negative emotions—hatred, anger, and fear—as pivotal components of the psychological repertoire of societies involved in “intractable conflicts.”<sup>1</sup> According to this perspective, members of societies in such conflicts share and repeatedly experience these emotions. In addition, these

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emotions play an important role both in shaping the societal context and in guiding group members' behavior in response to conflict events (Bar-Tal, Halperin, and de Rivera 2007).

Yet it is well established today that negative emotions should not be treated as a one-dimensional phenomenon. In recent years, scholars (Frijda 1986; Roseman, Wiest, and Swartz 1994; Lewis and Haviland-Jones 2000; Fischer and Roseman, 2007) have attempted to distinguish between different negative emotions and to identify their features and response properties (Roseman 2002). However, empirical research on the role of specific group-based emotions in the context of conflict situations is still in its seminal stages.

It seems that there is vast agreement among scholars of conflicts regarding the centrality of group-based hatred in most conflicts (see, for example, Volkan 1997; Post 1999; Petersen 2002; Staub 2005). Nevertheless, although some theoretical writings referring to hatred are to be found (for examples, see Ben-Zeev 1992; Gaylin 2003; Sternberg 2003; Bartlett 2005; Royzman, McCauley, and Rosin 2005), few scholars have conducted in-depth empirical studies on its nature (e.g., McKellar 1950; Davitz 1969; Fitness and Fletcher 1993). Yet even these scholars have concentrated on the individual rather than on the intergroup level. Therefore, the main goal of the current empirical investigation is to create a deeper understanding regarding the nature of group-based hatred and its role in the context of conflict.

The main premise underlying this study is that specific characteristics and features of group-based hatred turn it into a critical barrier to solving conflicts. More specifically, it is suggested that group-based hatred helps to interpret events (appraisal) and direct behavior (emotional goals and action tendencies) in a way that contributes to the continuation of the conflict.

The current empirical work has three main sections. In the first stage, qualitative research is presented to provide some exploratory views of group-based hatred. The preliminary insights determined in this stage have been empirically examined in the second and third sections. In the second stage, a scenario-based research is presented that uncovers the appraisal component of group-based hatred. Finally, in the third stage, a large-scale representative sample survey was used to shed light on the emotional goals and action tendencies that are exclusive to hatred.

All empirical investigations were conducted within the Jewish society in Israel in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For more than one hundred years, Palestinian nationalism and Zionism, the Jewish national movement, have been clashing recurrently over the right to self-determination, statehood, and justice. This conflict is a prototypical example of an intractable conflict—that is, it is protracted, violent, total, and central, with much investment into its continuation; it has been perceived as irreconcilable and zero sum (Bar-Tal 2007). The intractable nature of this conflict serves as fertile ground for the evolvement of negative emotional responses in general and of group-based hatred in particular.

## On the Nature of Group-based Hatred

As mentioned, despite the extensive acknowledgment of its potential destructive impact, there are few contemporary definitions of hatred (for potential explanations, see Yanay 2002). To create a well-established point of departure for the current study, group-based hatred was defined, conceptualized, and characterized by the integration of three theoretical sources.

First, I draw on cognitive and social psychology research on emotions (e.g., Frijda 1993; Manstead, Frijda, and Fischer 2004). Accordingly, emotions consist of four key components: recognition of the existence of the stimulus (change), an appraisal of its potential effect, feelings we have in regard to the stimulus, and readiness to take action toward it. Therefore, emotion is defined in the present research as an individual's affective response that develops in reaction to a cognitive appraisal of an environmental stimulus or change and subsequently creates a motivation to take action until there is a return to the "balanced" relationship between the individual and her environment.

The second theoretical cornerstone is social psychological studies on collective emotions, group-based emotions, or emotions targeted at out-groups (e.g., Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000; Bar-Tal, Halperin, and de Rivera 2007). It is well established today that people can experience a variety of emotions toward out-groups on the basis of identification with the in-group and its members, even if they personally have not experienced these events (Mackie, Devos, and Smith, 2000). Hence, in the present study, group-based hatred was examined. This type of hatred is experienced by individuals in the name of their group and as a corollary of their membership in the group, and it is directed toward generalized social groups.

Based on the two theoretical foundation stones presented above, there is a third foundation stone that in practice constitutes the main thrust of the present study—theoretical perspectives of group-based hatred, definitions, features, and causes. Recently, Royzman, McCauley, and Rosin (2005, 3) have claimed that "in spite of scores of books, topical discussions, stirring editorials, and hate-fighting initiatives, there is no single, commonly accepted definition of hate." Yet, through the years, different scholars have tried to accurately define the concept. Some of these definitions have been very general and all-inclusive, while others have concentrated on very specific features of hatred. It is suggested that two main elements constitute the basis for most definitions.

First, many of the conceptions deal with the appraisal of the hater regarding the motives and the nature of the hated group or object. These conceptions are closely related to some the basic insights that were first raised in the attribution theory (Heider 1944). Ben-Zeev (1992) argued that hatred is always directed at a defined object or group and denounces that object or group basically and all-inclusively. Elster (1999) suggested that hatred is an emotion caused by the judgment that the

other person or a group is evil. Others have claimed that hatred feeds on despair that originates in a person's inability to change the behavior of the hated object and stresses abhorrence and generalized hostility toward every behavior, action, or trait of the hated individual (Ortony, Clore, and Collins 1988).

Second, a large number of the definitions focus mainly on the behavioral intentions or goals that are related to hatred. Allport (1954) suggested that hatred is an "enduring organization of aggressive impulses towards a person or a class of persons" (p. 363). According to White (1996), hatred reflects the desire to harm, humiliate, or even kill its object—not always instrumentally but rather to cause harm as a vengeful objective in itself. Recently, Bar-Tal (2007) has suggested that hatred is a hostile feeling directed toward another person or group that consists of malice, repugnance, and willingness to harm and even annihilate the object of hatred.

In sum, the above theoretical conceptions suggest that hatred is a very powerful negative emotion that motivates and may lead to negative behaviors with severe consequences. In the context of conflict, it induces violent solutions and might even lead to mass murder or genocide (Staub 2005). The following three studies attempt at providing an empirical validation for some of those conceptions and at isolating the specific characteristics of hatred from those related to other negative emotions.

## **Study 1: A Lay Conception of Group-based Hatred**

### **Introduction and Background**

As a result of the lack of empirical evidence regarding the nature of group-based hatred, the first study was exploratory and aimed at providing a preliminary view of the inclusive repertoire of group-based hatred. Thus, I collected and qualitatively analyzed autobiographical narratives of events that were exclusively related to group-based hatred (see Fischer and Roseman, 2007). General conclusions about the psychological nature of group-based hatred were drawn, assessing the subjective viewpoint of people about their experience of hatred (see McKellar 1950; Davitz 1969). The results of the first study referring to the appraisals and the behavioral components of hatred were used as a baseline for the assumptions tested in the next studies.

As in qualitative autobiographical studies, prior research on hatred (e.g., Fitness and Fletcher 1993) helped in constructing the following series of research questions, which, in the initial stages, were the basis for in-depth interviews and, at a later stage, helped in creating a framework for content analysis: (1) What cognitive appraisals of the experienced situation, the hated group, and the in-group accompany group-based hatred? (2) What types of feelings accompany this emotion? (3) What are the behavioral intentions deriving from the feeling of group-based hatred, and what are the actual behaviors that the hatred provokes? (4) What are the key characteristics of hatred on an intergroup level?

## Method

*Participants.* I conducted in-depth interviews with 30 participants from the general Jewish population in Israel. The participants were gathered using a “snowball” procedure in three distinct geographical areas in Israel (north, south, and center of Israel). The mean age among the participants was 40 (range 25–60), 14 were men and 16 women, 46.7% had an academic education, and 44.8% reported an income equal to or lower than the average in the Israeli society.

*Procedure and instruments.* Each in-depth interview included two stages. In the first stage, each of the participants was asked to recall an incident in which he or she thought that a certain person felt hatred toward a certain social group.<sup>2</sup> In the second stage, participants were asked to carry out the same task, but this time, they were asked to relate to an incident in which they themselves felt hatred toward a social group. After the participants described their stories in a detailed and structured manner, they were asked a series of follow-up questions. Eventually, each participant filled out a basic sociodemographic questionnaire.

Interviews were transcribed, and the resulting texts were subjected to a systematic content analysis. To conduct this analysis, data from the two stories in each interview were combined, and the text was divided into four groups according to the main research questions. Afterward, the definition of central themes of the categories was based on a combination of participants’ statements during the interviews and existing theories in the field. Then, three expert referees were asked to divide responses into these defined thematic categories. Similar to the method used by Davitz (1969), themes were considered valid only if they were found in more than one-third of the interviews.

## Results<sup>3</sup>

In order to discover the “lay theory” of the interviewees regarding the characteristics of group-based hatred, they were asked to explain why they consider the emotional intergroup event they described as a “hatred event.” In general, the interviews demonstrated that participants perceived hatred as an extreme (60%), long-term (66.6%) and highly emotional phenomenon (63.3%).<sup>4</sup> Almost all related to hatred as an immoral or nonlegitimate emotion (93.3%). In addition, most participants (56.6%) argued that it was possible to clearly distinguish between acute and immediate hatred and chronic hatred.

A whole set of cognitive perceptions was part of the process that led to hatred and accompanied it. Some perceptions strengthened the group-based nature of the emotion by creating an absolute distinction between the two groups. For example, there was a perception of conflict between the groups in regard to their basic goals as well as a perception of a disparity in the values and ideology of the groups

(70%). This disparity placed the out-group outside the accepted norms (delegitimation) (76.6%) and thus helped ascertain the superiority of members of the in-group (90%).

Hatred was also accompanied by the appraisal that the offense committed by the out-group was unfair (66.6%) and intentional (66.6%). Members of the out-group were perceived as evil and dispositionally bad, and therefore, their actions were not perceived as a coincidental or one-time occurrence (73.3%). Finally, a significant number of participants reported that they felt as if they would not be able to cope with future offenses committed by the hated person or group (46.6%).

Affectively speaking, two emotions—fear (46.6%) and anger (90%)—play a central role both in the process of the evolution of hatred (i.e., causes of hatred) and in the accompanying emotions that shaped the experience of hatred itself. However, results showed that while fear is more dominant in the stage that leads to hatred, anger plays a more central role in the stage of the experience of hatred itself.

Behaviorally, the large majority (83.3%) stated that they would have wanted something very bad to happen to the hated group and its members. This was accompanied by a need to engage in a violent action with the hated people (83.3%) to a point where respondents supported the killing of members of the out-group (50%). Still, only a few (16.6%) reported the actual execution of a violent action. The three most common actions reported by the participants were complete detachment from the object of the hatred (83.3%), delight at the expense or failure of the hated other (36.6%), and political action taken against the other (56.6%).

## Discussion

Combined with the bulk of literature on group-based hatred—not necessarily empirical—the preliminary results of Study 1 have allowed for the following working definition of hatred: Hatred is a powerful, extreme, and persistent emotion that rejects the group toward which it is directed in a generalized and totalistic fashion. Group-based hatred is provoked in consequence to recurrent offenses committed against the individual or his or her group. These offenses are perceived as intentional, unjust, threatening the person or his or her group, and of a nature with which in practice the individual has difficulty coping. This hatred includes cognitive elements that make a clear ideological, moral, and cultural differentiation between the in-group and the out-group while delegitimizing the out-group. The affective element of hatred is secondary, and it is manifested in unpleasant physical symptoms as well as in anger, fear, and a strong negative feeling toward the out-group to the point of a desire to harm and even destroy it. In the majority of cases, this desire is not realized and therefore is channeled to other behavioral directions, such as isolation from the object of the hatred, delight at the expense of the hated other, or taking part in political action against him or her.

Although the results of Study 1 are interesting, they suffer from all of the well-known disadvantages of qualitative research. Moreover, it could be argued that the method used activates participants' conceptual knowledge about hatred rather than accurate memory of specific events. Yet I believe that the method accurately serves the specific goals of the study—it provides some preliminary insights regarding the nature of group-based hatred and constitutes the baseline for systematic quantitative studies. Accordingly, these preliminary findings mainly in reference to the appraisal and the behavioral aspects will be further examined, using quantitative methods in studies 2 and 3.

## **Study 2: The Cognitive Aspect of Group-based Hatred**

### **Introduction and Background**

I conducted an in-depth examination of the cognitive aspects of group-based hatred. The conceptual platform for the study was appraisal theories of emotions (for elaboration about the theories, see Roseman 1984; Smith and Ellsworth 1985; Scherer 2004). Surprisingly, most appraisal researchers have not examined hatred on an individual or a collective level. Accordingly, an examination of group-based hatred-related cognitive appraisals is an important signpost in the investigation of the nature and essence of group-based hatred. Furthermore, in the present study, an attempt was made to “distill” the cognitive appraisals related to each negative emotion that constitutes the psychological repertoire of societies in conflict—hatred, anger, and fear.<sup>5</sup>

It is commonly assumed that the perception of negative consequences for the individual or his or her group resulting from the behavior of out-group members is a precondition for the development of all three negative emotions toward the out-group. Yet it seems that different combinations of appraisals regarding the causes, motives, relative strength, and future behavior of the out-group may lead to each of the three discrete emotions.

On the basis of the findings of the first study and the findings of past studies that dealt with cognitive appraisals of fear, anger (Smith and Ellsworth 1985; Scherer 2004), and proxies of hatred, such as dislike (Roseman 1984), I assumed that five dichotomous dimensions are sufficient to form predictions that could best represent each one of the three emotions: just/unjust event, the out-group/circumstances were responsible, intentional/unintentional offense, behavior rooted/not rooted in the character of out-group members, capable/incapable of dealing with the offense. I expected to find that group-based hatred would be related to the perception of out-group members as culpable of an offense that is unjust and intentional; a result of a stable, evil character; and one that in-group members do not believe that they can cope with in the future. Further elaboration in regard to the expected differences between group-based hatred, anger, and fear are represented here in the form of research hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* It was expected that anger and hatred would be related to the perception of an act committed by the out-group as unjust, and on the other hand, I did not expect to find a relationship between this appraisal and fear.

*Hypothesis 2:* It was expected that while anger and hatred would be related to the appraisal of out-group members as culpable of an offense, fear would not be related to such an accusation.

*Hypothesis 3:* It was expected that hatred would be significantly related to the appraisal of an offense as intentional, while anger would be more moderately related to this perception, and fear would not be related to it at all.

*Hypothesis 4:* It was expected that while hatred would be related to the perception that offensive actions were the result of an evil character, the relationship between anger and this appraisal would be more moderate, and no relationship would be found between fear and this perception.

*Hypothesis 5:* I expected to find that while anger would be related to the appraisal of confidence in the individual's ability to cope with a change in events (high control), fear and hatred would be related to an appraisal of helplessness (low control).

## Method

*Participants.* Data were collected by means of face-to-face questionnaires conducted among 240 Israeli-Jewish students at a number of institutions of higher learning in Israel (Tel Aviv University, Haifa University, Ridman College). Filling out the questionnaires was voluntary. More than half (56%) of the participants were women, the mean age was 27 ( $SD = 6.86$ , range 19–62), most participants (57%) described their income as average or above average, and most (83%) were secular.

*Procedure and instruments.* The method used for testing the hypotheses is usually defined as “imagined responses to criteria-based scenario stimulations” (Scherer 1987). Each interviewee was provided with a questionnaire that included a detailed description of four emotionally conflicting scenarios. All scenarios were based on conflict narratives provided by the participants of study 1.<sup>6</sup> One scenario dealt with family exposure to a terror attack, another with expressions of anti-Semitism, the third with an intergroup violent event at a nightclub, and the fourth with religious-based conflict. For example, the wording of the first scenario was as follows: “Yaron is an Israeli-Jew who lives with his family in Hadera [northern Israel]. Recently, a number of terror attacks were committed in his town. Many Israelis were injured and several were killed. Yaron's niece, Deborah, who lives next door to him, was seriously injured in the attack last week. The sequence of the attacks and the injury of his niece made Yaron feel very bad.”

Following the presentation of each scenario, a manipulation of the cognitive appraisals of the protagonist in the story regarding each of the five dichotomous dimensions was presented: (1) just/unjust event, (2) out-group/circumstances were responsible, (3) intentional/unintentional harm, (4) out-group is evil/not evil, and (5) low/high coping potential. For example, to manipulate the *just/unjust* dimension in reference to the story of Yaron, half of the participants read the following sentence (*unjust*): “Yaron believes that violent behavior targeted at innocent citizens is not legitimate in any situation.” On the other hand, participants assigned to the *just* condition read a totally different sentence: “Yaron believes that terror attacks are a legitimate response to the Israeli occupation.”

To test each dimension in a way that was independent of the effect of the other dimensions, thirty-two versions of a combination of cognitive appraisals for each of the stories were constructed. The various versions represented the total possible combinations of the five dichotomous dimensions. The order of the dimensions was changed randomly for each scenario and questionnaire. After reading each of the four scenarios and the manipulated appraisals, participants were asked to rank the degree to which the story protagonist felt each of the negative emotions being studied—hatred, anger, and fear.

## Main Findings

*Descriptive statistics.* As a preliminary procedure, to control for the specific content of each of the four scenarios, results from the four scenarios were aggregated into a unified data file ( $N = 960$ ). Descriptive statistics for emotional variables show that all in all, levels of group-based hatred ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ) were significantly lower than the levels of group-based anger ( $M = 4.63$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ,  $t = 21.73$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and fear ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ,  $t = 11.23$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As for the correlations between the three emotions, while the correlation between hatred and anger was found to be positive and high ( $.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ), the one between hatred and fear was significant and positive but low ( $.09$ ,  $p < .01$ ). No significant correlation was found between anger and fear.

*Main effects of appraisals on emotions.* In the following stage, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted to reveal main and interaction effects of appraisal dimensions on each of the emotions (see table 1 for main effects).<sup>7</sup> As predicted in hypotheses 1 through 4, I found main effects of out-group blame, unjust behavior, intentional harm, and out-groups' evil character on both hatred and anger. Nevertheless, contrary to hypothesis 5, no main effects of the level of coping potential on these emotions were found. As predicted (hypothesis 5), low coping potential was found to be the only dimension that has a significant main effect on the level of group-based fear.

**Table 1**  
**Main Effects (Multivariate Analysis of Variance) of Appraisal**  
**Dimensions on Group-based Hatred, Anger, and Fear**

Emotion	Appraisal Dimension				
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>
	Just ( <i>n</i> = 481)		Unjust ( <i>n</i> = 479)		
Hatred	3.48	1.48	3.77	1.51	10.86**
Anger	4.42	1.21	4.84	1.06	40.84***
Fear	4.41	0.64	4.29	1.45	1.78
	No Out-group Blame ( <i>n</i> = 483)		Out-group Blame ( <i>n</i> = 477)		
Hatred	3.49	1.50	3.76	1.51	8.56**
Anger	4.49	1.14	4.77	1.17	14.35***
Fear	4.38	1.38	4.31	1.48	0.97
	Not Intentional Harm ( <i>n</i> = 473)		Intentional Harm ( <i>n</i> = 487)		
Hatred	3.14	1.49	4.08	1.37	103.97***
Anger	4.36	1.23	4.89	1.02	50.94***
Fear	4.31	1.43	4.38	1.44	0.52
	Not Evil Character ( <i>n</i> = 483)		Evil Character ( <i>n</i> = 477)		
Hatred	3.08	1.46	4.17	1.34	163.8***
Anger	4.35	1.26	4.92	.96	66.95***
Fear	4.38	1.39	4.31	1.47	0.36
	High Coping Potential ( <i>n</i> = 435)		Low Coping Potential ( <i>n</i> = 525)		
Hatred	3.51	1.52	3.71	1.48	2.03
Anger	4.63	1.18	4.63	1.14	0.66
Fear	3.99	1.47	4.63	1.33	44.43***

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

*Differentiating between the appraisals of hatred and anger.* Table 1 shows a clear difference between the cognitive aspects of hatred and anger and those of fear. Nonetheless, it raises some questions regarding the differentiation between the appraisal dimensions of hatred and anger. A closer look at the table shows that the effect of the appraisal of out-group blame is quite similar for both anger and hatred. On the other hand, the results show that while the appraisal of unjust behavior seems to be more important in predicting anger than hatred, the appraisals of intentional harm and evil character appear more important in the development of hatred than in that of anger.

For the purpose of examining the significance of these differences, I conducted a five-way mixed design ANOVA on the anger and hatred ratings, with type of emotion (hatred vs. anger) as within-subject factors and out-group blame, unjust behavior, intentional harm, and out-groups' evil character as between-subject factors. The results showed no significant interaction between the appraisals of out-group blame,  $F(1, 932) = .02, p = .90$ , and of unjust behavior,  $F(1, 932) = 1.81, p = .18$ , and the type of emotion (hatred or anger). In other words, the effects of out-group blame and of unjust behavior will be uniform across the two emotions (hatred and anger). On the other hand, significant interactions were discovered between the type of the emotion (hatred or anger) and the other two appraisals: intentional harm,  $F(1, 932) = 16.84, p = .00$ , and out-groups' evil character,  $F(1, 932) = 31.57, p = .00$ . Given that the previous analysis (see table 1) indicated that the directions of the effects of these two appraisals on hatred and anger were similar, the interactions suggest that in line with hypotheses 3 and 4, these two appraisals are significantly more important in predicting hatred than in predicting anger.<sup>8</sup>

## Discussion

The main purpose of study 2 was to point to the specific appraisals that are related to group-based hatred and to differentiate between hatred-related appraisals and those related to group-based fear and anger. The results show that fear is ruled by the appraisal of low coping potential with future harm and anger with the evaluation of out-group actions as nonlegitimate or unjust. On the other hand, two main appraisals dominate the hatred process—the appraisal of the harm as intentional and its appraisal as deriving from a stable, evil character of out-group members.

By and large, the results regarding fear and anger appraisals concur with findings of previous studies that concentrated on those emotions on the individual level (Roseman 2001). However, contrary to previous findings on group-based anger (see Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000), no significant relationship was found between a high sense of future control and coping potential and the experience of group-based anger. Hence, it may be assumed that in the unique context of an intractable conflict, a perception of high capability to cope with future harm is not an essential precondition to the development of anger.

Generally speaking, results referring to the two main appraisal features of group-based hatred concur with previous theoretical insights about hatred (see for example, Ben-Zeev 1992; Sternberg 2003) as well as with the findings of study 1. Yet, besides the original empirical support of these insights, the current study's findings enable an in-depth look at the dynamic and evolvement of group-based hatred. In the first stage, individuals perceive that members of the out-group have caused significant offense to them or to members of their group. Then individuals

surmise that they do not “deserve” this affront, and therefore they develop anger. In some cases, individuals surmise that their (or their group’s) future ability to cope with this type of offense is weak, and therefore, they develop fear. In the event that the emotional experience described above is accompanied by two additional appraisals—(1) underlying the out-group’s actions, there is intention to harm and cause injury to members of the in-group, and (2) actions of the out-group result from a generalized evil character of members of the out-group—the process develops into a group-based hatred. In this case, hatred enables the individual to cope with feelings of fear and moderates them, while at the same time, the experience of anger continues to exist and is, in fact, sometimes “fueled” and intensified by appraisals associated with hatred.

### **Study 3: The Behavioral Aspect of Group-based Hatred**

#### **Introduction and Background**

Motivational and behavioral tendencies are some of the most important features of emotions (Frijda, Kuipers, and ter Schure 1989; Frijda 2004). In the early 1960s, Arnold (1960) suggested that each emotion is related to a specific action tendency. More than two decades later, Frijda (1986) pointed to action “readinesses” that are typical of seventeen discrete emotions (see also Frijda, Kuipers, and ter Schure 1989). Roseman (1984, 1994) has distinguished between actions, action tendencies, and emotional goals. However, while actual behavior is dependent on numerous external factors and hence in many cases cannot be directly predicted by specific emotions, it seems that the tendency toward acting in a certain way, as well as the more general motives or goals, is an inherent component of each emotion. Hence, the current study focuses on examining action tendencies and emotional goals that are related to group-based hatred and not necessarily to anger and fear.

Previous empirical studies have pointed to the distinct action tendencies and emotional goals of different individual (Frijda, Kuipers, and ter Schure 1989; Roseman 2002) as well as group-based (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000; Yzerbyt et al. 2003; Cottrell and Neuberg 2005) negative emotions. While anger is usually associated with approach-related tendencies, fear is related to avoidance-related tendencies (e.g., Frijda, Kuipers, and ter Schure 1989). Accordingly, within the group-based context, fear is related to avoiding contact with out-group members (Cottrell and Neuberg 2005), while anger is linked to taking action against them (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000).

In reference to the more abstract emotional goals, fear is related to the willingness to be protected or to creating a safer environment (Roseman 1994). Fischer and Roseman (2007) have recently argued that while anger, which is an attack emotion (Roseman, Wiest, and Swartz 1994), is aimed at gaining a better outcome or improving the behavior of the object, negative emotions, such as contempt, belong to the

exclusion-emotion family, aiming at excluding the other person from one's social network (Roseman, Copeland, and Fischer 2003). Review of the theoretical literature on hatred implies that it might also be classified in the exclusion category.

On the basis of these empirical findings and relying on theoretical writings about hatred (for review, see Royzman, McCauley, and Rosin 2005) and the findings of the previous two studies, the following typology is suggested. Group-based hatred reflects despair about any attempt to improve the behavior of "evil" out-group members. Hence, the main emotional goals would be to remove the hated-group members from the hater group's social spectrum while maximizing the harm (physically, socially, politically) of out-group members. These emotional goals are totally different from those related to fear—creating a safer environment—or from those related to anger—correction or attaining a better outcome.

Yet some similarities between hatred and each of those other two emotions are to be expected when translating these general emotional goals to specific action tendencies. This is mainly due to the fact that the direct and explicit action tendencies that stem from hatred's emotional goals (support for annihilation of the out-group) are considered illegitimate and do not stand up to any social norms. Hence, it is assumed that these emotional goals would be transformed either into an extreme approach-attack tendency (violence, revenge), or in more moderate hatred, it might take the form of avoidance-distance emotion (support for disengagement).

In accordance with the above, the following hypotheses were tested:

*Hypothesis 1:* It is expected that while fear will be related to the goal of creating a safer environment and anger to the goal of creating a better outcome or improving the out-group, hatred would be related to the aspiration to do evil to out-group members and to the removal of out-group members from the in-group's environment (emotional goals).

*Hypothesis 2:* It is expected that fear will be related to avoidance-distancing tendencies, anger to attack, or correction (for example, through education) tendencies and hatred to an extreme form of one of the three tendencies: disengagement/distancing, attack/hurting, and exclusion/destruction of the out-group (action tendencies).

## Method

*Participants.* To ultimately examine the research hypotheses within the context of an emotionally charged conflict, a target design was created, which is based on a goal sample of Israeli Jews who experience very high levels of negative emotions toward Palestinians. The selection of the sample was based on the premise that it would be easier to point to the differences between the closely related emotions (hatred, anger, and fear) within a sample of highly emotional individuals.

To create the goal sample, I used a method often employed in studies on political tolerance (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982). A national, representative, large-scale ( $N = 847$ ) survey was conducted during two weeks in March 2006 in Israel. Individuals were contacted via phone by native speakers in Hebrew and Russian and were invited to participate in a study of intergroup relations in Israel. Respondents were presented with a number of political groups and were asked to select their least liked group. All participants who pointed to Palestinian groups (Hamas, the Islamic Movement, the Hadash Party) as their first least liked selection were entered into the sample. In correlation with the findings of previous studies recently conducted in Israel (Shamir and Sagiv-Schifter 2006), when compared to other alternative out-groups, Arab and Palestinian groups were the most common selection of Israeli Jews; 37.4% (313) chose Arab groups as their most disliked out-group.

The sample represented the distribution of the Israeli Jewish population regarding gender, age, place of residence, and education (Central Bureau of Statistics 2005). The mean age of the respondents was 48 years ( $SD = 14.43$ ). 52.1% (163) were men and 77% (241) were married. In terms of education, 5.8% (18) did not complete high school, 26.5% (83) possessed high school education, 22% (69) had some post-high school education, and 45.4% (142) were students or declared they had a university or college degree. Regarding their political stand, 35.8% (112) defined themselves as rightist and 58.8% (184) as centrist or leftist.

*Procedure and instruments.* The assumption underlying questionnaire construction was that group-based emotions are a temporary response to a specific harmful event. Hence, following the selection of the least liked group, to make the participants relive the emotions, a short preliminary preface was constructed: "Since the beginning of the Intifada, some of the members of the [chosen out-group] have taken part in a large number of actions regarded by some Israeli citizens as dangerous to state security. Some of these members have publicly expressed support for acts of terror and the destruction of Israel and several even took part in various acts of terror."

The paragraph was aimed at reminding the participant of actions recently committed by out-group members. It should be emphasized that the short paragraph did not include new information but was simply a reminder of common public knowledge. After listening to the conflict-related text, participants were asked to recall the thoughts and feelings they experienced immediately after hearing about the actions mentioned.

Accordingly, participants were asked to indicate their feelings toward Palestinians on a series of eight 6-point rating scales. These items concerned group-based hatred (hostility, hatred;  $\alpha = .75$ ), anger (angry, irritated, and revolted;  $\alpha = .92$ ), and fear (afraid, scared, and worried;  $\alpha = .86$ ). All emotional scales were computed with an average-extracting procedure.

**Table 2**  
**Exploratory Factor Analysis for the Eight Emotional Items**

Item	Factor (F) Loadings		
	F1 (Anger)	F2 (Fear)	F3 (Hatred)
Angry	.83	.31	.18
Irritated	.84	.34	.23
Revolted	.88	.28	.24
Afraid	.20	.84	.23
Scared	.36	.76	.30
Worried	.42	.79	.12
Hatred	.35	.31	.75
Hostility	.14	.16	.90

Note: Eigenvalue = 9.63; variance explained = 89.72%.

Finally, participants were asked to rate on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 6 (*very much*) their level of endorsement of a wide list of potential emotional goals and action tendencies (see table 3 for the complete list of items). The behavioral goals list included items closely related to the goals of exclusion (“removal of out-group members from one’s life”), attack (“cause hurt to out-group members”), distance (“create a safer environment”) and correction (“improving the behavior of out-group members”). Correspondingly, the action tendencies list was composed of items referring to exclusion behaviors, attack or violent behaviors, avoidance behaviors, and improvement or correction behaviors.

## Results

To confirm the differentiation between the three emotions, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the data using a principle components analysis with a varimax rotation. As seen in table 2, a very clear three-factor solution was obtained. These factors were maintained on the basis of the statistical procedure and the theoretical meaningfulness of the factors. Hence, the results lend credence to the existence of three different group-based negative emotions—hatred, anger, and fear, which are probably closely related but independent constructs.

Then means, standard deviations, and correlations were calculated for the three emotions. In general, levels of all three emotions were relatively high. Yet the level of group-based hatred ( $M = 3.33$ ,  $SD = 1.69$ ) was lower than the level of fear ( $M = 4.09$ ,  $SD = 1.53$ ,  $t = -5.94$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and anger ( $M = 4.62$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ ,  $t = -10.09$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Correlations between the three emotions are all high, positive, and significant at the level of  $p < .001$  (anger–fear,  $r = .68$ ; anger–hatred,  $r = .55$ ; fear–hatred,  $r = .55$ ). Yet, in all cases, these correlations are lower than the accepted level for multicollinearity, which is 0.7 (Bagozzi, Yi, and Phillips 1991).

**Table 3**  
**Descriptive Statistics for Emotional Goals and Action Tendencies**  
**and Multiple Regressions (Standardized) for Predicting Emotional**  
**Goals and Tendencies by Group-based Hatred, Anger, and Fear**

Item	<i>M (SD)</i>	Hatred	Anger	Fear	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Emotional goals					
1. Live and let live: Create a safe environment	4.93 (1.48)	-.23* (-2.27)	.13 (1.51)	.23* (1.94)	.09
2. Change attitudes and perceptions of out-group members (corrections)	2.39 (1.81)	.06 (.59)	.26* (2.17)	-.13 (-1.10)	.05
3. Removal or destruction of out-group	2.77 (1.82)	.52*** (6.01)	.18 (1.81)	-.07 (-.75)	.35
4. To do evil to out-group	2.96 (1.82)	.66*** (8.09)	-.03 (-.36)	.08 (.18)	.43
Action tendencies					
1. Avoid any social relations with out-group	5.38 (1.20)	.11 (1.10)	-.19 (-1.59)	.23* (2.00)	.05
2. Support of educational channels to create perceptual change	4.5 (1.59)	.16 (1.63)	.32** (2.87)	-.03 (-.27)	.17
3. Physical and violent action	2.2 (1.79)	.43*** (7.53)	.13* (1.94)	-.06 (-.88)	.23
4. Support of political and social exclusion of out-group	3.3 (1.9)	.46*** (5.09)	.17 (1.65)	-.03 (-.31)	.30
5. Disengagement and separation (social and political) between the two groups	4.53 (1.62)	.26** (2.63)	.13 (1.13)	.05 (.42)	.15

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

Results of descriptive statistics for the emotional goals and action tendencies (table 3, left column) show that the most popular emotional goal is the one emphasizing creating a safer environment—"live and let live."<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the least popular goal is changing out-groups' beliefs and perceptions. As for action tendencies, very high support was found for various levels of avoidance or distancing behavior. In addition, high support was discovered in the "educational channel" item. Finally, although the support for physical or violent actions is quite low, support for the use of political and social means to exclude the out-group is much more prevalent.

In the final stage, by means of linear regressions, I regressed emotional goals and action tendencies on the three emotions. As predicted by hypothesis 1, group-based hatred (but not anger or fear) is related to the willingness to do evil and even remove or destroy the out-group. However, anger is the only emotion that is related to the willingness to improve the out-group and change the perceptions of its members. Finally, while fear is positively related to the distance, or "live and let live,"

emotional goal, hatred is negatively related to it. It seems that although in some situations, haters might support disengagement, their final goal in reference to the out-group is much more extreme.

The results presented in the lower part of table 3, which focuses on the relations between emotions and action tendencies, draws a more complicated picture. As predicted in hypothesis 2, fear is exclusively related to the tendency toward preventing any social contact with the out-group (distance/avoidance), and anger is highly related to the support of an educational effort that will create attitude change (improvement) and marginally related to physical and violent action. Group-based hatred, however, is related to various action tendencies—support for political and social exclusion, violent actions, and disengagement of the groups.

## Discussion

The results of study 3 show that group-based hatred is related to a very specific emotional goal—to do evil to, remove, and even eliminate the out-group. On the other hand, its related action tendencies are not so absolute. The problematic nature of the emotional goals seems to turn the more practical tendencies into more diverse phenomena. In some situations, haters will desire to move away from the out-group; in others, they will aspire to hurt the out-group members, and in more extreme events, they might even support or take part in a destruction process.

The question that arises is whether group-based hatred can be defined as an emotion if it does not include a very precise action tendency. In line with Frijda (1986); Oatley and Johnson-Laird (1987); and Smith, Seger, and Mackie (2007), I argue that emotions are characterized by a more strategic view of behavioral goals rather than by tactical means for implementing those goals. From that perspective, group-based hatred differs from anger and fear. While fear is related to the goal of creating a safer environment, haters would not be satisfied with this situation alone. They would aspire at least to a disengagement process and would often wish to cause suffering to the out-group members. In addition, the entire behavioral aspect of hatred contradicts the basic anger-related emotional goals that focus on correction or improvement of the out-group. Group-based hatred reflects despair of any potential change and, hence, will not support correction attempts.

The results of the current study highly correspond with previous empirical studies on the behavioral aspects of fear and anger (Frijda, Kuipers, and ter Schure 1989; Roseman 2002) as well as with some theoretical views regarding hatred (Sternberg 2003). Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge, this is one of the first studies that has empirically tested the behavioral aspect of hatred. Therefore, the results provide a fertile ground for future research focusing on that specific aspect of hatred. One interesting line of research could focus on the specific conditions in which the strategic emotional goals of hatred translate into extreme emotional tendencies and even to extreme actions.

## General Discussion

The results of the three studies show that group-based hatred is a distinct phenomenon that includes a unique cognitive-appraisal component and specific emotional goals. These findings challenge the claim according to which hatred is no more than an extreme form of anger or even a transformation of fear (see, for example, White 1996). Findings of studies 2 and 3 point to clear qualitative differences between hatred and anger or fear, which are above and beyond the differences in the magnitude of each emotion.

James Averill (1994, 385) argued that “emotional feelings are stories we tell ourselves in order to guide and account for our own behavior.” The findings of the current work draw an interesting yet rather problematic picture regarding the story of group-based hatred. It seems that similar to individuals who experience other intergroup negative emotions, haters believe that out-group members harm them, their group as a whole, or other members of their group. In addition, however, haters appraise the harm as intentional and as stemming from a stable evil character of out-group members. That evaluation leads to despair of any hope for potential change, which neutralizes the motivation to change attitudes or behavior of out-group members. Actually, it leads almost intuitively to the willingness to harm out-group members and to the aspiration of removing them from in-group’s environment.

The empirical findings about the nature of group-based hatred concur with previous theoretical writings about hatred (see Ben-Zeev 1992; Sternberg 2003; Royzman, McCauley, and Rosin 2005). Moreover, the results provide further validation of some comprehensive theories that have created typologies of emotions. An important example is a theory presented by Ortony, Clore, and Collins in 1988. They proposed three main groups of emotions that were distinguished on the basis of their cognitive locus. While anger is focused on the actions of target objects and fear on the consequences of events, hatred is exclusively focused on the object itself (Ortony, Clore, and Collins 1988). The current results reinforce these assumptions. They show that anger is related to the evaluation of the behavior of the out-group as unjust and to the willingness to improve that behavior, fear is related to the appraisal of low coping potential with consequences of future events and to the willingness to create a safer environment that will protect from those same results, and hatred is related to the evaluation of the out-group as evil and the aspiration of removal of the out-group from the in-group’s life.

The focus of the interpretation as well as of the emotional goals that are related to hatred in the hated object itself turns hatred into an emotion that can easily be experienced in a collective or group-based form. It seems to be much easier to generalize an emotion that is targeted at an object to an entire group than to apply the same transformation to an emotion that is focused on specific actions (such as anger) or consequences of events (such as fear). For example, some of the interviewees of

study 1 said that they felt fear of terror, anger at the terrorists who committed the attack, and hatred toward all Palestinians. Hence, although previous studies have demonstrated that emotions such as anger or fear can also be felt on a group-based platform (see, for example, Smith, Seger, and Mackie 2007), I suggest that the characteristics of hatred make it more susceptible to such transformation.

The findings regarding the collectivity of hatred and the evaluation about the evil character of the out-group raises important questions about potential association between hatred and psychological theories of essentialism (Haslam, Rothschild, and Ernst 2000). Psychological essentialism entails a belief in the stability of categories over time and a belief that all members of a category share a common underlying essence (Prentice and Miller 2007). Previous studies found close relations between essentialism, stereotyping, and prejudice (see, for example, Bastian and Haslam 2006). Other studies have pointed to the problematic consequences of essentialism on social motivation and intergroup relations (Shelton and Richeson 2005). Hence, it seems only reasonable to suggest that essentialism might be one of the central preconditions to the development of intergroup hatred.

The nature of hatred, as revealed in the current work, might have enormous implications for different stages of the conflict and its potential resolution. Kriesberg (2007) broadly described four main stages that characterize each conflict—the emergence of the conflict, the escalation of the conflict, its deescalation, and its settlement. On the basis of the current findings, I would like to suggest that group-based hatred would play a destructive role in all stages of the conflict but would mostly affect the preservation of the conflict and would represent an obstacle to every attempt to resolve the conflict.

As far as democratic societies are concerned, deescalation and resolution of conflicts in most cases require an in-depth change of attitudes within the public sphere (Shikaki and Shamir 2002). That kind of change must include processes of unfreezing, motivation to learn new knowledge, and openness to new ideas and persuasion (Marcus 2006). The nature and construct of hatred (i.e., its continuity, its extremity, its determinative character) along with its unique and inherent content (appraisals and emotional goals) turn it into an ultimate barrier in the face of such potential processes.

More specifically, according to Bar-Tal (2007), to cope with the challenges of intractable conflicts, societies develop appropriate societal-psychological repertoires, which include collective memory, ethos of conflict, and collective emotional orientations. On one hand, this repertoire is functional, but on the other, it delays any attempt to resolve the conflict. I would like to suggest that in the context of conflicts, group-based hatred turns into the glue that holds the components of the repertoire together.

First, group-based hatred might contribute to the preservation of the groups' subjective, biased, and one-dimensional collective memory about the history of the conflict. Numerous theoretical writings and empirical findings show that the exclusiveness and the centrality of the collective memory of the conflict play an important role in harming attempts to achieve peace and reconciliation (Halbwachs

1992). It seems that the rigid and dichotomous nature of hatred undermines every potential attempt to create a more balanced perspective of history or even see it, on certain occasions, through the prism of the out-group.

In addition, it is reasonable to assume that close relations exist between group-based hatred and some of the central societal beliefs (Bar-Tal 2000) that constitute the psychological infrastructure of societies in conflict. An important example for the ethos component that might be induced by hatred is the delegitimization of the opponent. Delegitimization places the opponent into extreme, negative social categories that are excluded from human groups considered as acting within limits of acceptable norms and/or values (Bar-Tal 2000). Dehumanization, as an extreme form of delegitimization, contributes to the legitimization of initiating violent actions toward the out-group and reduces the need for achieving a peaceful solution between the groups (for elaborated discussion of dehumanization, see Haslam 2006). It is suggested that the extreme appraisal of the opponents' motives in addition to evaluations referring to their evil character, which are embedded within hatred, will fuel that destructive belief.

Another important potential implication of hatred-related appraisals and emotional goals might be justifying immoral behaviors of in-group members while sustaining another societal belief—positive self-image. It appears that deep-rooted intergroup hatred might moderate potential development of moral emotions, such as guilt, regret, or shame, which in some situations might have positive effect on resolving conflicts (Wohl and Branscombe 2005). Moreover, hatred might have a determinative influence on the development of the perception of self-victimhood (Volkan 1997) among in-group members and in the creation of blindness toward any claims of counter-victimhood raised by the out-group.

The inherent relations between group-based hatred and some of the central psychological characteristics of societies in conflict call for a deeper evaluation of the educational implications of the current findings. Educational programs and organizations aimed at fighting intergroup hatred are prevalent in almost every conflict zone. Yet fighting such a powerful and destructive phenomenon is extremely difficult, mainly due to its abstract nature and the lack of knowledge regarding its features. The current results provide more focused borderlines for any future program that concentrates on the reduction of hatred.

Notwithstanding its advantages, the study may suffer from some limitations. Most important, the correlative nature of most of the investigations calls for some caution. The immoral nature of hatred makes any potential hatred-related manipulation (or even priming) somewhat problematic from an ethical perspective. Nevertheless, it should be noted that no claim for any causal relations has been raised, and hence, considering ethical limitations, a correlative design was suitable.

In sum, group-based hatred is a classical example of a highly important issue that inherently includes moral, ethical, and methodological problems and hence has been neglected by most scholars through the years. The current study is one of the

first in-depth empirical attempts to identify the unique components of hatred within the context of an intractable conflict. Although the results draw a relatively dark picture of hatred in the context of conflicts, I argue that a better understanding of the nature of hatred, to which that current work has modestly contributed, is an essential step toward moderating hatred and its negative consequences on conflicts.

## Notes

1. According to Kriesberg (2005), intractable conflicts are those that are persistent and destructive despite repeated attempts at resolution.

2. It is worth noting that the two-stage procedure was a result of a pilot study ( $N = 5$ ) in which all participants refused to report on their experience of hatred when they were asked to do so at the very beginning of the interview.

3. The detailed transcript of the interviews is available upon request from the author.

4. The percentage of interviews in which the theme occurred appears in parentheses.

5. It should be noted that in addition to these three emotions, other emotions such as contempt are also mentioned frequently in the context of conflicts (see Fischer and Roseman 2007).

6. A complete wording of the four scenarios and the manipulated appraisals is available upon request from the author.

7. Of all thirty possible combinations (ten two-way interactions for each of the three emotions), only three interactions were found to be significant: (1) Intentional Harm  $\times$  Evil Character interaction on hatred, (2) Intentional Harm  $\times$  Evil Character interaction on anger, and (3) Out-Group Blame  $\times$  Evil Character interaction on hatred (see Web appendix and table A2 for detailed discussion in the significant interactions).

8. A multiple regression analysis for predicting each of the emotions by all appraisals confirmed the presented pattern and revealed large differences in the size of the effects of intentional harm and evil character on hatred and anger (see table A1, Web appendix).

9. Bivariate correlations between items within the groups of emotional goals and action tendencies were conducted to reject any possibility of multicollinearity. In all cases, the correlations were found to be lower than the accepted level for multicollinearity, 0.7 (Bagozzi, Yi, and Phillips 1991).

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