



“ Emotions in conflict resolution and
post-conflict reconciliation ”

Titre en français

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Les émotions ont longtemps été reconnues comme un facteur important dans le contexte de la résolution des conflits et la réconciliation post-conflit. Récemment, des chercheurs ont fait de grands progrès sur le sujet en explorant les antécédents distinctifs et les effets sur le comportement des différentes émotions telles que la haine, la colère, la culpabilité et l'espoir. Cet article offre un aperçu complet de ces recherches contemporaines et met en évidence l'interdépendance des émotions, des processus cognitifs et des facteurs supplémentaires qui donnent lieu à des attitudes et des actions politiques. Basé sur des recherches révélant que les émotions peuvent influencer le succès ou l'échec de la résolution et les tentatives de réconciliation post-conflit, nous suggérons que l'espoir en place de régulation, la culpabilité, la peur et la colère (quand les niveaux de la haine sont faibles) et de la haine de régulation négative peut avoir des implications constructives pour les Casques bleus au stade de la réconciliation post-conflit. Nous suggérons aussi que la détermination de la maturité émotionnelle entre en conflit, une mesure de la préparation des parties émotionnelles à aller de l'avant, peut aider les soldats de la paix identifier les mesures qui augmenteront la probabilité d'une paix durable.

Emotions have long been recognized as an important factor to consider in the context of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconciliation. Recently, scholars in the field have made great strides in terms of expanding our knowledge on the subject by exploring the distinctive antecedents and behavioral effects of different discrete emotions such as hatred, anger, guilt, and hope. Additionally, findings related to the emerging subfield of emotion regulation suggest ways that peacemakers and peacekeepers might help facilitate more amicable relations among states. The present work provides a comprehensive overview of such relevant contemporary research and, in doing so, highlights the interconnectedness of emotions, cognitive processes and additional factors that give rise to political attitudes and actions. Based on research revealing that emotions ultimately influence the success or failure of resolution and post-conflict reconciliation attempts, we suggest that up-regulating hope, guilt, fear, and anger (when levels of hatred are low) and down-regulating hatred can have constructive implications for peacekeepers in the post-reconciliation stage of conflict. We also suggest that determining a conflict's emotional ripeness, a measure of the parties' emotional readiness to move forward, can help peacekeepers identify steps that will increase the likelihood for sustainable peace.

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That emotions themselves are not the guns that fire or bombs that explode in war should not distract our attention from exploring with vigor the pluripotential they may possess as either triggers for destruction or catalysts for peace. Perhaps, by understanding their function, we will find ourselves better positioned to help once vengeful adversaries transition toward the common goal of establishing a solid foundation on which to build.

Discussions regarding conflict in the international arena often revolve around state's interests, military power, financial means, leadership, allies, and resources. In so far as these factors are fundamental in terms of influencing the success or failure of resolution efforts, it is understandable that they frequently take center stage during public discourse. However, scholars of international relations have long recognized that another factor, emotion, also plays an integral role in shaping attitudes and behaviors during intergroup conflict (Horowitz, 1985; Linder, 2006; Petersen, 2002). Emotions are thus important in so far as they influence people's political beliefs and actions about the conflict and its resolution alternatives. Recently, as the topic has continued to garner additional attention in the realm of international relations, researchers have begun to shed new light on the ways in which such conflict related actions and political support are often driven by emotional undercurrents.

Scholars in the field of emotions in intergroup conflict have made great strides in terms of expanding and refining our knowledge on the subject (e.g., Bar-Tal, Halperin & De-Rivera, 2007; Halperin, Sharvit & Gross, 2010; Halperin, 2010; Horowitz, 1985; Peterson, 2002). Our main goal in the current work is thus to provide a general overview of recent literature related to emotions in intergroup conflict. With a specific focus on the resolution and post-conflict peace building stages of conflict, the fundamental question addressed throughout the paper is: How do emotions fit into the process of influencing political attitudes and actions?

The paper is structured by first introducing relevant definitions along with a general framework (Halperin et al., 2010) to help guide our understanding of emotions in conflict. In the next section, we turn our attention to describing the specific role of different discrete emotions such as hatred, anger, guilt and hope as illustrated in the findings of recent empirical studies. We then offer some preliminary thoughts on emotion regulation (Gross, 1998) in conflict situations, a process involving the attempt to influence or transform emotions among society members with the goal of helping to cultivate amicable relations among states (Halperin et al., 2010). We conclude with an explicit emphasis on the post-conflict stage, addressing the question: What are the implications of emotions and emotion regulation for those working toward the achievement of sustainable peace in post-conflict settings?

1. Emotions in Intergroup Conflict: Understanding the General Framework

1.1. Emotions, Appraisals, and Emotional goals

Emotions are flexible response sequences that transform a substantive event into a motivation to respond to it in a particular manner (Frijda, 1986; Tooby & Cosmides,



1990; Zajonc, 1998). Following the recent trend in social psychological literature, the present work explores discrete emotions such as hatred, anger, fear, and hope rather than simply focusing on positive and negative emotions in terms of general valence. Such an approach offers greater specificity regarding the antecedents and effects of different emotions in conflict.

Cognitive appraisals and emotional goals can potentially contribute greatly to the understanding of each discrete emotion's unique role in an intergroup conflict setting. Cognitive appraisals, which can be thought of as the cerebral precursor to the emotion itself, include a comprehensive evaluation of the emotion-eliciting stimulus (Roseman, 1984; Scherer, 2004). In light of their cognitive nature, appraisals have been described as the particular "story" an individual formulates to evaluate and understand an event or experience (Averill, 1994). *Emotional goals*, on the other hand, are generated after the experience of an emotion and involve the behavioral component of the "story" (Frijda, 1986). Emotional goals capture the general, long-term motivations driven by the emotion and hence can be contrasted with action tendencies, which are more immediate and specific (Roseman, 1994).

Research has shown that in addition to experiencing emotions in response to personal events and activities, individuals can also experience them in response to events that affect other members of a group with which they identify (Mackie et al. 2000, Wohl, Branscombe, & Klar, 2006; Yzerbyt., Dumont, Wigboldus, & Gordon, 2003). Thus, in the context of intergroup conflict it is important to account for *group-based emotions*, which are emotions felt by individuals as a result of their affiliation or identification with a certain-group or society (Mackie, Devos & Smith, 2000; Smith, 1993; Smith & Mackie, 2008). Overall, group-based emotions can be targeted at events, individuals, or social groups (Halperin 2010). In the latter situation, where such group-based emotions are targeted at social groups, they are defined as *intergroup emotions*. Intergroup emotions thus are experienced as a result of one's felt belongingness to their "in-group" and targeted at an "out-group" (Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007).

While emotions are responses to specific events, *sentiments* represent configurations of emotions that endure over time and are unrelated to any specific event or action (Arnold, 1960; Ekman, 1992; Frijda, 1986, 1994). Such stable group-based emotional sentiments can become an inherent part of the standing psychological perspective throughout society even in the absence of new conflict related events (Halperin et. al., 2008, Kelman, 1997). Thus, emotional sentiments felt by society members can greatly influence their subsequent emotional reactions in conflict and post-conflict environments (Halperin & Gross, 2010a).

1.2. Emotions in Conflict – An Appraisal Based Framework

A crucial prerequisite to understanding emotions in conflict and post-conflict settings is the acknowledgement that emotions themselves emerge within the context of an interconnected series of events involving many factors. Accordingly, Halperin et al. (2010) recently offered a comprehensive framework depicting how emotions influence individual and collective beliefs, attitudes and behaviors regarding war and peace (see Figure 1).



Step one of the process that eventually helps influence people's political attitudes and behavioral reactions to specific events can begin in one of three ways: either a new conflict related event occurs, new information related to the conflict is brought forth, or a past conflict related event is recalled. The event or information in this first step can be negative (e.g., war, terror attack, rejection of a peace offer) or positive (e.g., a peace gesture, willingness to compromise), but it must be appraised as meaningful. The event can be experienced personally, but frequently is experienced directly by few group members who then transmit their experiences to other group members through the mediation of leaders, the mass media or other individuals. In these cases, if the individuals identify with the same group as the directly exposed individuals, they experience group-based emotions (Smith, 1993; Mackie et al., 2000).

After this first step in the process, an individual attempts to understand what has occurred through the use of her/his cognitive appraisal, which, as mentioned, is effectively the "story" they employ to make sense of the experience. Interestingly, different individuals exposed to the exact same events may go on to form disparate appraisals. The reason for such variation is that appraisals are influenced by three main factors: long-term emotional sentiments, framing of the events, and long-term non-affective psychological factors. Long-term emotional sentiments about the adversary are perhaps the most consequential and powerful factor in terms of biasing cognitive appraisals (Halperin & Gross, 2010a). Additionally, different frames that paint the adversary in relatively positive or negative light can lead to divergent cognitive appraisals. Cognitive appraisals are also affected by non-affective factors such as personality characteristics, adherence to moral values, socio-economic status, religious conviction and ideology (Halperin, 2008; Sharvit, Halperin & Rosler, 2008).

Looking at the process as a whole, we see that a person's cognitive appraisal following an event is influenced by long-term emotional sentiments, non-affective factors and framing. Such an appraisal effectively steers what reactive emotion(s) such as fear, anger, or hope the individual experiences thereafter. Subsequently, these emotions go on to influence group member's political attitudes and actions greatly by virtue of the unique emotional goals associated with each emotion. Hence, according to the appraisal based framework, discrete emotions constitute a central junction mediating the aggregated effect of long and short term psychological factors on individuals concrete positions and actual behavior in response to conflict related events.

1.3. Empirical studies supporting this model

Empirical findings from recent studies help to validate the framework described. For example, one study (Halperin & Gross, 2010a) revealing the connection between sentiments, cognitive appraisals, and emotions utilized a unique two-wave nationwide representative panel design of Israeli citizens before and subsequently during the war in Gaza. The research examined how a long-term sentiment of anger would effect specific anger reactions towards the out-group. The study found that long-term anger assessed 13 months prior to the Gaza War was the most important predictor of anger responses during the war, even when controlling for relevant

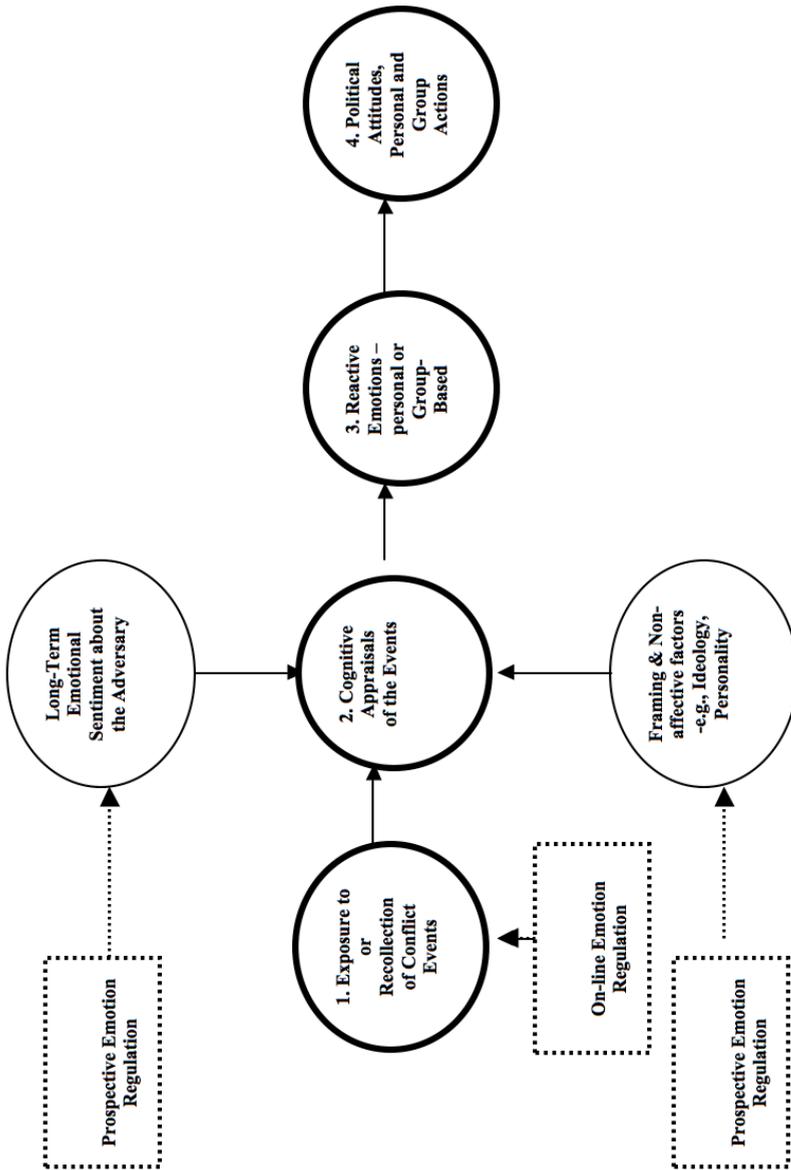


Figure 1: An appraisal based framework for emotions and emotion regulation in conflicts



short-term factors like exposure to missiles or appraisal of Palestinian's behavior at that time. Another key finding was that specific cognitive appraisals associated with anger mediated the effect of anger sentiments on anger responses during the war. With respect to the model, findings from the Gaza study bring empirical support to the portion of the framework describing the link between emotional sentiments, cognitive appraisals and the emotions that follow.

Another empirical study (Halperin, 2010) that illustrated the model's usefulness particularly clearly utilized an experimental survey to test the distinct role played by different discrete emotions within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The study, which was conducted one week prior to the November 2007 Annapolis Peace Summit, included a representative sample of Jewish-Israelis ($N=501$). The experimental design involved presenting Israeli citizens with a newspaper article that described the Palestinian delegation's approach during pre-summit negotiations. Various versions of the newspaper article induced different emotions such as fear, anger, or hatred in participants. Subsequently, respondents were asked questions designed to measure their cognitive appraisals, emotional reactions, attitudes toward the adversary and desire for action (support for compromise and reconciliation, desire to take risks for peace, support for militant action, out-group blame attribution, desire to stop negotiations).

Results from the study supported the general pattern presented in the model described in figure 1. That is, the ultimate political attitudes and actions respondents supported were shaped in large part by the "story" they were exposed to through the newspaper articles and the emotions they experienced in between. Importantly, each emotion had a discrete influence on specific factors. For example, fear was found to be the only emotional antecedent of the opposition to taking risk in negotiations while hatred was the only emotion that reduced support for symbolic compromise and reconciliation. Anger was found to produce complex results in that it led to the tendency to blame to the Palestinians and concurrently helped induce constructive stances (support for taking risks in negotiations and openness to positive information about them).

Overall, we see the process represented in figure 1 played out in definitive terms through the Annapolis Peace Summit study. Anticipation of the Summit itself (the event) was followed by manipulations of the newspaper story (the specific cognitive appraisals), which in turn helped to affect the emotions induced in respondents (specific reactive emotions). Fear, anger and hatred in turn produced disparate effects leading participants to adopt different attitudes and desire actions consistent with the emotions they'd just experienced.

2. Roles of Specific Emotions in Conflict

By mapping out the distinctive antecedents and behavioral effects of different discrete emotions, recent studies have left us better equipped to understand their role in conflict settings. While we could have chosen to highlight any of a number of consequential emotions in the present work, we will focus on hatred, anger, guilt,



Table 1: The unique “story” of each emotion

Cognitive Appraisal (Unique story) →	Corresponding Emotion →	Emotional Goal and Action Ten- dency	Political Positions
-Out-group has permanently evil character -Out-group cannot change	Hatred	-Desire to harm or even eliminate out-group entirely	-Avoid negotiation/ compromise -Intensify military capacity, strength, & aggressiveness
-Out-group has wronged us - Appraised relative strength and high control	Anger	-Always an approach tendency -At times: support for aggressive or violent actions -At other times: desire to “educate” the out-group	-Pluripotential to inspire violence or promote willingness to compromise
- Acknowledgement of in-group responsibility -Victimization of the out-group violated in-group norms/ values	Guilt	-Rectify wrongdoings -Compensate the victims	-Symbolic gestures -Support for reparative measures
- A future different from (and likely better than) the past/ present is imagined as attainable	Hope	- Expectation and aspiration for a positive goal	-Willingness to conceive of new approaches (negotiating with the enemy, making compromises, etc.)

and hope for illustrative purposes and because of their relevance in both conflict and post-conflict settings. Table 1 provides a more comprehensive overview of the unique “story” associated with each emotion.

As shown, each story involves a unique cognitive appraisal, emotional goal, action tendency, and political positions. Hence the emotion encapsulates the entire process leading from the acknowledgment of the new event/information to the actual formation of the adjusted (political) response to the event. With this in mind, we now turn our attention to describing the link between each emotion’s story and the political attitudes and behaviors that eventually follow in greater depth.

2.1. Hatred

Hatred is a secondary, extreme, and continuous emotion which is directed at a particular individual or group and denounces them fundamentally and all inclusively (Sternberg, 2003; Opatow & McClelland, 2007). This intense emotion

is associated with high levels of de-legitimization and dehumanization of the hated out-group (Haslam, 2006). Accordingly, in terms of emotions, hatred is the ultimate barrier to peace.

In one empirical study (Halperin, 2008, study 2) designed to reveal the specific appraisals related to group-based hatred, data was collected from 240 Israeli-Jewish students through a method commonly defined as “imagined responses to criteria-based scenario simulations” (Scherer, 1987). Each participant was shown four scenarios in which a protagonist faced an emotionally difficult situation (terror attack, anti-Semitism, violence, religious-based conflict), however different respondents were presented with various manipulations of the protagonist’s cognitive appraisal. Lastly, participants were asked to rank the degree to which the story’s protagonist felt negative emotions such as hatred. Results showed that two main cognitive appraisals dominate the hatred process- the belief that the out-group has a stable, evil character and the belief that the out-group has harmed the in-group intentionally. One upshot of maintaining the former appraisal is that the (Halperin, Russell, Dweck, & Gross, 2009) in-group will avoid pursuing solutions that involve educating the adversary because the out-group is not viewed as capable of change.

A related study (Halperin, 2008, study 3) designed to test the motivational and behavioral tendencies associated with group-based hatred involved a phone survey in which 847 Israelis were asked questions about an out-group they disliked strongly. Participants provided feedback regarding their feelings towards the out-group and ranked their level of endorsement for a wide range of potential goals and action tendencies. Results revealed that group-based hatred is related to a very specific emotional goal- to do evil to, remove, or even eliminate the hated out-group entirely. Hence, based on the findings that hatred is associated with the cognitive appraisal viewing the out-group as permanently evil and the emotional goal to harm the out-group significantly, it is not surprising that the emotion often acts as a significant barrier to conflict resolution and post-conflict reconciliation efforts.

2.2. Anger

Anger is brought forth when an individual perceives the actions of others as unjust, unfair or as deviating from acceptable social norms (Averill, 1982).

Anger is referred to as an approach emotion because it generates approach related action tendencies that are generally aimed at resolving the anger-producing event (Harmon-Jones & Sigelman, 2001). The emotion is typified by a cognitive appraisal of relative strength and high control, motivation to correct perceived wrongdoings, and willingness to engage in risky behavior (Reifen-Tagar, Federico, & Halperin, 2009). Anger has been repeatedly shown to elevate public support for aggressive actions (Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003; Skitka., Bauman., Aramovich & Morgan, 2006; Huddy, Feldman & Cassese, 2007; Cheung-Blunden & Blunden, 2008). However, further research in the field shows



that behaviorally, the unique characteristics of anger can bring about constructive as well as destructive political attitudes.

Recent studies related to anger have helped to provide further clarity regarding the emotion's dual potential. One such study (Reifen-Tagar et al., 2009, study 2) utilized an experimental methodology to examine the casual relationship between anger and the desire to take risks in the context of political negotiations. Data from the study reveals that anger can increase support for positive risk taking and non-violent policies in the de-escalation stage of conflict. Such results challenge the more traditional assumption that aggressiveness is the exclusive response tendency associated with anger. Alternatively, the findings illustrate that anger is not an exclusively militant emotion- rather its effects are contextually dependent.

In order to help shed light on why anger would be constructive in one context and destructive in another, Halperin and colleagues (Halperin et al., 2010) tested whether anger would lead to different action tendencies among people with varying levels of hatred. Results showed that anger served to decrease willingness to compromise among those with high levels of hatred, while the emotion actually increased willingness to compromise among participants with low levels of hatred. Thus, the same characteristics of anger (making people feel strong, accepting of risk, etc.) that led to negative results when accompanied by high levels of hatred actually served to catalyze constructive responses in instances when levels of hatred were low or non-existent.

Thus, on the basis of such research we see that anger is a complex emotion with the pluripotential to either motivate destructive thoughts and actions that propel war or inspire attitudes and actions that help to cultivate peace (Halperin et al., 2010). Whether anger ultimately produces constructive implications for conflict resolution efforts depends on situational factors such as timing and the presence and extent of other emotions and sentiments.

2.3. *Guilt*

Group-based *guilt* is associated with an appraisal that one's in-group acts of victimization have violated norms or values to which the group is committed (Branscombe, 2004; Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006). The emotion is focused on the wrongdoing itself and not on the characteristics of the violator (Tangney, 1991). Ultimately, guilt can help lead to political attitudes and actions that are constructive in terms of conflict resolution and, later, post-conflict reconciliation efforts.

Research has revealed that the acknowledgment of in-group responsibility for causing victimization can provide the psychological basis for feelings of group-based guilt (Cehajic & Brown, 2010; Branscombe, Doosje, & McGarty, 2002; Leach, Snider & Iyer, 2002). Additional findings show that the emotional goals associated with guilt can motivate group members to take action aimed at rectifying past wrongdoings on the part of their in-group (Brown & al, 2008; Cehajic, Effron, Halperin, Liberman, & Ross, 2009; Doosje & al., 1998; Iyer & al., 2003; Pagano & Huo, 2007; Wohl & al., 2006; Zebel, Zimmermann, Viki, & Doosje, 2008, but



see Iyer & al., 2007). Accordingly, guilt often provides the impetus for in-group members to offer reparations (Branscome & Doosje, 2004; Brown & Cehajic, 2008) as they seek to atone for previous injustices.

One recent study (Cehajic et al., 2009 study 2) undertaken in Israel helped to verify and expand upon previous knowledge by exploring the effectiveness and consequences of up regulating guilt. In an effort to increase their levels of guilt, a portion of the 139 participants completed specific writing prompts after being introduced to self-affirmation strategies that involved highlighting positive self-aspects unrelated to any specific threat. With the help of AMOS 6 software, results revealed that those respondents who affirmed their positive self image, experienced higher levels of group-based guilt and in turn were significantly more inclined to support reparation policies designed to assist the victimized Palestinian group.

A similar study conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Cehajic et al., 2009 study 3) employed many of the same measures as the research just described, this. In order to measure the effects of group based guilt in a new context, 117 local High School students were asked to fill out a questionnaire related to the Srebrenica genocide. After completing writing prompts, student's levels of group-based guilt were measured. As in the study before, participants who affirmed themselves felt more guilt on behalf of their group and consequently were more willing to endorse reparation policies for out-group victims affected by injustices. Both studies highlight that strategies such as self-affirmation which give rise to guilt can be fruitful because the emotion tends to encourage constructive compensatory action.

2.4. Hope

Hope involves expectation and aspiration for a positive goal, as well as positive feelings about the anticipated outcome (Staats & Stassen, 1985). It facilitates goal-setting, planning, use of imagery, creativity, cognitive flexibility, mental exploration of novel situations, and even risk taking (Breznitz, 1986; Snyder, 1994). Hope liberates people from fixed – and limiting - beliefs about the irreconcilability of the conflict to find creative ways to resolve it. It enables them to imagine a future that is different from the past and present and motivates them to change their situation by means of actions that were long unthinkable (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006).

One study recently conducted within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Halperin, Bar-Tal, Nets-Zehngut, & Drori, 2008) offers insights regarding the antecedents of hope in conflict situations. As part of the study, 217 Israeli-Jewish undergraduates completed a questionnaire assessing their levels of hope along with other measures such as collective memory, delegitimization of the rival, political orientation and personal experiences. Multiple regression analysis showed a strong negative correlation between delegitimization and levels of personal and collective hope. Similarly, individuals with hawkish political orientations as well as those with army service in the territories tended to experience the emotion in significantly smaller doses. Additionally, individuals dominated by a central sense of collective memory were more resistant to changes in their levels of hope.



Another study related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict found that hope was the single best emotional predictor of support for compromises for peace even when controlling for ideological and other emotional factors (Rosler, Gross & Halperin, 2009). Lastly, research conducted in Northern Ireland found that hope was positively related to the dissipation of the desire to retaliate, which, in turn, was positively correlated with the willingness to forgive the adversary (Moeschberger Dixon, Niens, & Cairns, 2005). These results suggest that in times of war people who preserve some level of hope will support conciliatory actions like providing humanitarian aid to innocent out-group members during war. In terms of the emotional process described earlier, the cognitive appraisal associated with hope (i.e., a better future is possible) can serve to render once stagnant barriers to conflict resolution more workable. In both the resolution and post-conflict resolution stages, hope is thus an important ingredient.

As we saw from the four discrete emotions discussed- hatred, anger, guilt, and hope – each comprises its own story that is preceded by a unique interpretation of events and followed by behavioral responses designed to address the subjective needs that flow from this interpretation.

3. Preliminary Thoughts on Emotion Regulation

As we saw, multiple steps (conflict event, cognitive appraisal, emotions) precede the eventual formation of political attitudes and actions. With this in mind, scholars have recently turned their attention to examining how these stages might be addressed through emotion regulation in order to help support conflict resolution and reconciliation efforts. *Emotion regulation* itself is an emerging subfield which refers to processes that are engaged when individuals try to influence the type or amount of emotion they (or others) experience, when they (or others) have them, and how they (or others) experience and express these emotions (Gross, 1998). When it comes to intergroup conflicts, the basic premise behind the technique (see: Halperin et al., 2010) is that because discrete emotions are associated with varying effects, if we can successfully intervene by regulating emotions, we will be able to affect political actions as well as personal and group attitudes in a positive manner. In light of the fact that each emotion produces unique effects, however, it is also important to be very specific about which emotions we regulate and when.

The current literature points out five families of emotion regulation processes: situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation (Gross, 1998) which are distinguishable by the point in the emotion-generative process at which they have their primary impact (Gross & Thompson, 2007). Despite the importance of all other regulatory processes, we will focus here on approaches that address cognitive change as examples of what emotion regulation entails. As is illustrated in figure 1, when utilized prior to any specific event in the attempt to preemptively influence the cognitive appraisal stage of the process, the regulatory strategy is called *prospective emotion regulation* (Halperin et al., 2010). Similarly, the strategy is referred to as *online reappraisal* when employed to affect emotions elicited as the emotion-triggering event unfolds (Sheppes & Meiran, 2007).





One recent study (Halperin & Gross, 2010b) providing a rather direct test of the efficacy of emotion regulation involved a nationwide survey conducted in the midst of the Gaza war. The 201 Jewish-Israeli adult participants were asked to report on the way they dealt with negative emotions (whether or not they've utilized reappraisal techniques) while being exposed either directly or indirectly to the recent violent events. For example, each participant was asked to rate the extent to which they controlled their emotions by changing the way they'd been evaluating recent war related situations. Results revealed that Israelis who regulated their negative emotions during the Gaza war through reappraisal were more supportive of providing humanitarian aid to innocent Palestinian citizens and that this relation was partially mediated by an enhanced feeling of hope. Thus, reappraisal can help initiate the process whereby hope is generated and followed by a greater tendency to support conciliatory measures such as support for humanitarian aid.

Aforementioned studies (Cehajic et al., 2009) conducted in Israel and Bosnian and Herzegovina respectively also show the power of emotion regulation in inducing guilt and promoting post-war reconciliation. The goal of the self affirmation manipulation that was described before was to allow people to reaffirm their positive self-image and by that to remove obstacles that prevent them from taking responsibility for their group's wrongdoings. Effectively, the studies revealed that efforts to up-regulate feelings of guilt in participants increased support for reparation policies favoring victimized groups in both contexts. Accordingly, the research suggests that self-affirmation holds promise as an emotion regulation strategy aimed at increasing acknowledgement of a group's wrongdoing, which can have positive implications in the resolution and reconciliation phases of conflict.

Research has also shown (Russell et al., 2010) that emotion regulation interventions aimed at affecting long term hatred sentiments prior to an event (prospective emotion regulation) can be more useful than trying to limit the magnitude of the emotion during or right after an event (online emotion regulation). Preliminary evidence related to the study suggests that implicit theories about the malleability of groups (Dweck, Chiu & Hong, 1995; Rydell, Hugenberg, Ray & Mackie, 2007) may play an important role in the attempt to reduce hatred. In terms of implicit theory, using reappraisal to introduce or bolster the belief that the adversary is capable of change could conceivably pave the way for reduced hatred and openness to compromise.

Overall, this promising field may play a part in helping to reveal new ways peacemakers and peacekeepers can respond to the public's unique emotional needs differently depending on the conflict situation. Initial research suggests that there is reason to be optimistic regarding the prospect that emotion regulation might have the capacity to play a role in ensuring that a solid and resilient foundation is formed to encourage and later support sustainable peace.

4. Discussion

As we have attempted to illustrate through the research presented, the study of emotions is of major importance in the understanding of forces that energize conflict and motivate its resolution. In the post-conflict reconciliation stage, emotions, like





a soldier's wound, often require specific and intentional attentiveness to heal, grow, or transform so that enough strength will emerge to support the weight of what reconciliation requires. With this in mind, we can begin to conceive how those working toward the achievement of sustainable peace in post-conflict settings might capitalize on the research related to emotions in intergroup conflict.

To begin, in terms of emotions, we can think of the reconciliation phase of conflict as an opportunity to cultivate emotions that will help springboard both sides from a state of negative peace (the absence of overt violence) to a state of positive peace (collaborative and supportive relations) (Galtung 1972). Equipped with two key ingredients - understanding regarding the unique effects of various emotions and the capacity to positively influence emotions through techniques such as emotion regulation - peacemakers will be better prepared to facilitate such a transition. For example, up-regulating empathy (Halperin & al., 2010) can be expected to have constructive implications in post conflict environments specifically in so far as the emotion gives rise to forgiveness and understanding, both necessary prerequisites to sustainable peace. Additionally, as illustrated in the aforementioned research (Branscome & Doosje, 2004; Brown & Cehajic, 2008), citizens who experience guilt are often more inclined to offer reparations and compromise with the former adversary. Thus, emotion regulation strategies aimed at up-regulating guilt could be expected to also help in reconciliation settings. Similarly, efforts to up-regulate fear would likely help ensure that parties would not digress back into a conflict state.

Aside from emotions such as empathy and guilt, the presence of hope should not be understated. As a forward thinking emotion, hope allows individuals and groups to see beyond barriers and envision a future where past difficulties are stepping-stones to future opportunities. At the opposite end of the spectrum, hatred in large doses can be seen as the emotional equivalent to superglue in that the emotion holds parties fixed to past assumptions about the out-group as evil and incapable of real change. Surely, in the post-conflict phase, such a cognitive appraisal, if left to fester and grow, could inhibit progress and lead parties back into a state of conflict. As we saw from the research, anger has the potential to act as a fuel propelling people to seek solutions. However, such solution seeking can take a variety of forms ranging from productive to wholly destructive. In terms of post conflict reconciliation, it is especially important to help steer anger towards constructive activities such as establishing synergistic programs between the sides enabling them to tackle issues that were once problematic together.

In line with Zartman's (2000) ripeness theory, which involves the notion that adversaries must experience a mutually hurting stalemate to catalyze the pursuit of a resolution, we propose that to be successful, post-conflict reconciliation must take place in a situation that is emotionally ripe. *Emotional ripeness* can be thought of as the degree to which the prevailing collective emotions felt by both parties support the practical possibility of progress towards sustainable peace. In layman's terms, determining both side's levels of emotional ripeness provides an answer to the question: Is there an emotional foundation on which we can build sustainable





peace or are the disputants still not ready? In terms of the model referred to in this paper, the presence of emotional ripeness exists when, with respect to collective emotions, the overriding long-term sentiments and non-affective factors are aligned with a predisposition to evoke cognitive appraisals in response to new or recollected events that give rise to emotions conducive to supporting constructive political attitudes and actions.

A situation is thus emotionally ripe when such emotions propel the transition towards collaborative relations. A conflict setting is emotionally unripe, on the other hand, in instances where the emotional roots underlying the issues in dispute are apt to continuously undermine or derail resolution attempts. Considering that not all resolution and reconciliation efforts are undertaken in situations that are emotionally ripe may offer a clue as to why adversaries, at times, are reluctant to move forward despite the fact that doing so would ostensibly appear to be in their best interest.

Whether conceived of in a general sense or examined with a great deal of precision, the process of determining emotion ripeness would be relatively straightforward. After determining the level of different emotions felt by society members, this information could then be compared to what we know about each emotion's unique effects. Such analysis, while far from an exact science, could potentially provide useful guidance revealing whether ripeness indicators (i.e. hope, empathy, forgiveness and even guilt and anger when levels of hatred are low) exist to propel the sides in the direction of positive peace. The functionality of knowing the "emotional ripeness" of the parties in a conflict or post-conflict setting is that a peacemaker could take aim at interjecting or fostering those emotional ingredients that are needed and lacking while, at the same time, taking steps to lessen or facilitate the healing of emotions that were previously acting as impediments.

We suggest that the presence of emotions such as empathy and hope, in varying degrees, can be expected to signal an emotional ripeness for the possibility of sustained peace whereas the presence of other emotional configurations may be seen as red flags indicating that, devoid of intense emotion regulation efforts, a relapse into conflict is more likely. A high degree of emotional ripeness would allow for the possibility that exposure to conflict events today or to future setbacks tomorrow will be met with a growth (Dweck, 2006) mindset which is conducive to reconciliation and compromise. The idea of emotional ripeness is also related to the concept of emotional climate, which refers to collective emotions experienced as a result of society's response to its sociopolitical conditions (De-Rivera 1992). Both ideas encapsulate the notion that various factors related to emotions (sociopolitical implications, collective emotions, etc.) help indicate the extent to which conditions are fertile for peacemaking or reconciliation efforts.

Though levels of emotional ripeness would likely be useful to consider in other stages of conflict as well, we suggest that the measure is especially critical to account for in the post-conflict reconciliation phase, which requires that the sides interact closely and with more frequency. In the end, emotional ripeness undoubtedly involves an involuntary or passive component as well as an active





one. The involuntary aspect of emotional ripeness is surely the part people refer to with the phrase “time heals all (emotional) wounds”. However, much to our concurrent chagrin and excitement (chagrin because we have work to do and excitement because we can effect positive change), there is also an aspect of emotional ripeness that is dependent on our action. Accordingly, it is incumbent us to actively seek and pursue potential contributors to emotional ripeness. For example, we might initiate programs designed to educate citizens about effective ways to regulate their emotions. Regardless of the methods we ultimately utilize, it is important to understand that we have a hand in ensuring that “emotional ripeness” is achieved and should not simply passively wait for the right time.

With this thought in mind and supported by new promise in the emerging field of emotion regulation, we are confident that it is possible to proactively and deliberately pave the way toward a greater chance at peace by helping parties acquire or further cultivate emotions which sustain or lead to emotional ripeness. Ultimately, in the reconciliation phase and beyond, the “stories” a group uses to understand their interactions with the out-group will help to direct not only the emotions they experience, but also the relationship they cultivate for years to come. Hopefully, research into emotions can play a role in helping to ensure that such stories drive post-conflict efforts in a positive direction. ■

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