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What is This?

Are Leftists More Emotion-Driven Than Rightists? The Interactive Influence of Ideology and Emotions on Support for Policies

Ruthie Pliskin[1,2], Daniel Bar-Tal[1], Gal Sheppes[1], and Eran Halperin[2]

Abstract

Although emotions and ideology are important factors guiding policy support in conflict, their interactive influence remains unclear. Based on prior findings that ideological leftists' beliefs are more susceptible to change than rightists' beliefs, we tested a somewhat counterintuitive extension that leftists would be more susceptible to influence by their emotional reactions than rightists. In three laboratory studies, inducing positive and negative emotions affected Jewish–Israeli leftists', but not rightists', support for conciliatory policies toward an adversarial (Studies 1 and 3) and a non-adversarial (Study 2) outgroup. Three additional field studies showed that positive and negative emotions were related to leftists', but not rightists', policy support in positive as well as highly negative conflict-related contexts, among both Jewish (Studies 4 and 5) and Palestinian (Study 6) citizens of Israel. Across different conflicts, emotions, conflict-related contexts, and even populations, leftists' policy support changed in accordance with emotional reactions more than rightists' policy support.

In political contexts, public support for policies can be of great consequence, as it shapes the results of elections and grants politicians legitimacy to pursue either conciliatory or aggressive policies toward other groups. Understanding what forms the basis for people's positions may therefore be crucial to the deeper understanding of intergroup conflicts and their elusive resolution. Various factors have been implicated in shaping policy support, among them personality, beliefs about utility factors, and past experiences. More recently, researchers have explored two additional explanatory factors shaping beliefs: (a) ideology (e.g., Altemeyer, 1996; Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009), seen as having a stable long-term influence on policy support, and (b) emotional processes (e.g., Frijda, Manstead, & Bem, 2000), seen as influencing short-term responses to new stimuli. Although the impact of each construct on political positions has been documented extensively, there have been only initial indications in the literature as to whether one might shape the effects of the other, with differing ideological positions leading to different outcomes for emotional processes (see Banks & Bell, 2013). Understanding the interactive effects of the two constructs on policy support may help integrate approaches focusing on stable, long-term influences versus intermittent circumstantial factors, as well as approaches focusing on cognitive versus emotional factors. The present research aimed to investigate these questions theoretically and empirically in the context of long-lasting, violent intergroup conflicts.

Ideology and Policy Support in the Context of Conflict

In recent years, psychological scholars have conceptualized ideology as a stable "interrelated set of attitudes, values, and beliefs with cognitive, affective, and motivational properties" (Jost et al., 2009, p. 315), indicating that ideologies relate to both the contents of beliefs and the needs underlying them. Because different ideologies fulfill different psychological needs, people tend to adopt ideologies suited to their dominant needs (Jost et al., 2009). The findings brought forth by

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this view propose that ideological differences relate to differences in the most basic cognitive and affective processes (see Jost & Amodio, 2012).

In the specific context of intergroup conflicts, ideological belief systems relating to the conflict are highly pervasive (Bar-Tal, 2000, 2013). Conflict-supporting (rightist) ideology in these contexts has been found to influence the positions and behavior tendencies of individuals, facilitating hostile intergroup attitudes, support for violence, and the rejection of conciliatory measures (e.g., Bar-Tal, Raviv, Raviv, & Dgani-Hirsch, 2009; Cohrs, 2012; Porat, Halperin, & Bar-Tal, 2013).

As the literature indicates, ideology constitutes a prism guiding individuals' interpretation of reality. Nonetheless, even the literature on ideology acknowledges that people are not always ideologically consistent in their positions (e.g., Federico, 2009; Jost et al., 2009; Zaller, 1992). Therefore, an examination of additional processes involved in the formation of specific, intermittent reactions is necessary for a better understanding of the factors behind support for political policies. The literature on emotional processes provides clearer indications as to the nature of such reactions.

Group-Based Emotional Processes and Policy Support in the Context of Conflict

Contemporary scholars see emotions as "states that comprise feelings, physiological changes, expressive behaviors and inclinations to act" (Frijda et al., 2000, p. 5). This final element is crucial: Emotional processes create a motivation to react in certain ways to the stimuli eliciting them. The literature has specifically identified group-based emotional processes—personal emotional experiences that are felt by individuals as a result of their identification with a certain group (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Yzerbyt, Dumont, Wigboldus, & Gordijn, 2003)—which are highly relevant to any discussion of emotion in intergroup contexts, in which group membership figures centrally in personal experiences. These emotional processes play a key role in intergroup conflicts, as they create motivations to react to outgroup-related stimuli in certain ways (e.g., Halperin, 2011; Mackie et al., 2000; Yzerbyt et al., 2003).

Countless studies have shown that both personal (see Frijda et al., 2000) and group-based (see Mackie et al., 2000) emotional processes significantly influence both attitudes and behaviors. Intergroup conflicts are no exception, and a wide range of emotional processes have been found to influence support for policies in these contexts (e.g., Cohen-Chen, Halperin, Crisp, & Gross, 2014; Halperin, 2011; Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003; Skitka, Bauman, Aramovich, & Morgan, 2006). This influence is attributed to the appraisals and emotional goals associated with different discrete emotional processes, which serve to translate exposure to emotional stimuli into action readiness (Frijda, Kuipers, & ter Schure, 1989; Halperin, 2011). Despite the knowledge already accumulated on the action tendencies associated with discrete emotions, various factors may moderate the association between emotions and their motivational and behavioral outcomes. We propose that just as variables such as context (e.g., Spanovic, Lickel, Denson, & Petrovic, 2010), framing (e.g., Halperin, Porat, & Wohl, 2013), and co-morbid affective processes (e.g., Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Halperin, Russell, Dweck, & Gross, 2011) moderate the outcomes of emotion, so may ideology.

The Interactive Influence of Ideology and Emotional Processes on Policy Support in Conflicts

Over the years, the literatures on both emotional processes and ideology in conflict have made initial reference to the complex relationship between them. Ideology is theoretically implicated in emotional reactions (see Jost & Amodio, 2012; Tomkins, 1963), whereas emotional processes serve as important factors shaping and consolidating ideological beliefs in conflict and otherwise (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011; Solak, Jost, Sümer, & Clore, 2012). Nonetheless, the role ideology plays in moderating the outcomes of emotional processes is yet unclear.

Although the proposed interactive effect of ideology and emotions has not been directly tested, the literature on ideology provides clues as to how ideology may moderate the effects of emotional processes on policy support. Theoretically, it has been suggested that leftists should be more motivated by positive affect than rightists, and that rightists are more motivated by negative affect (Tomkins, 1963), which may indicate different outcomes when experiencing different types of affect, depending on one's ideology. Empirical findings not directly related to affect may lead to a still clearer prediction, as they indicate that rightists' positions generally change less than others' positions under different circumstances: Ideological rightists are consistently found to be more rigid in their beliefs (Schultz & Searleman, 2002), scoring higher than leftists on measures of tough-mindedness, dogmatism (Jost et al., 2009; Stone & Smith, 1993), and the Need for Cognitive Closure (Jost et al., 2009). Conversely, leftists are found to be more tolerant of ambiguity and uncertainty than rightists, and their beliefs tend to be more ambiguous (Jost et al., 2009; Rokeach, 1960; Tetlock, 1983). Additional research has provided evidence that the baseline political judgments of individuals are similar regardless of their ideologies, but leftists "correct" their judgment in accordance with their ideology (Skitka, Mullen, Griffin, Hutchinson, & Chamberlin, 2002). Taken together, this evidence indicates greater rigidity in the positions of rightists in general and may, in accordance with the literature on rigidity (for reviews, see Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010; Schultz &

Searleman, 2002), point to a reduced potential for change in rightists'(vs. leftists') policy support further to the experience of strong emotions.

The Present Research

The goal of the present research was to examine how ideology moderates the effects of group-based emotions on policy support in the context of intergroup conflict. Such an understanding may be crucial theoretically, but may also be important on an applied level, guiding attempts to influence these outcomes so as to promote conflict resolution. We predicted that leftists' support for policies will be more related to their emotional processes, both positive and negative, than rightists' support, which would remain more rigid regardless of experienced emotion.

This prediction is based on the more general argument, supported by the existing literature, that rightists are more rigid in their beliefs than leftists and should therefore be less open to the influence of intermittent factors. However, this argument has not been tested with regard to emotion, and such an examination could be interesting in its own right, for several important reasons. First, on the level of theory, Tomkins (1963) has discussed emotions specifically, proposing that leftists value affect more than rightists, whereas rightists value its inhibition more than leftists—an interesting proposition that warrants empirical examination. Second, the literature on discrete emotional processes sees each emotion as motivating certain outcomes in accordance with its specific emotional goals (Frijda et al., 1989), but does not at its base consider possible boundary conditions for such an effect. Ideology may serve as one such boundary condition. Third, the literature has linked right-wing ideology with greater reactivity to certain emotions (e.g., fear, Jost & Amodio, 2012, and disgust, Inbar, Pizarro, & Bloom, 2009), which could potentially lead to a prediction at odds with the knowledge on rightists' relative rigidity—that rightists' (compared with leftists') political reactions should be more influenced by their emotion. Likewise, common wisdom often sees leftist ideology as the logical and emotionally detached approach to reality, while viewing rightist ideology as driven by irrationality and emotionality (e.g., "How to Create a Leftist," 2012; Kroeger, 2005). This perception also conflicts with the rigidity-based view. Together, these factors serve to single emotions out as an important and challenging domain in which to examine the prediction that rightists' (compared with leftists') support for policies will change less further to the experience of emotions.

To examine this prediction, we undertook six studies. We designed Studies 1, 2, and 3 with the goal of examining the proposed ideology by emotion interaction causally in controlled settings. To this end, we first manipulated levels of Jewish Israelis' empathy toward two different outgroups: the Palestinians, who are the adversary in an intractable conflict (Study 1), and Sudanese asylum seekers, an outgroup

unrelated to the context of intractable conflict (Study 2). We then manipulated levels of despair with regard to Israeli–Palestinian conflict resolution efforts (Study 3), so as to examine our hypothesis with regard to an emotion different from empathy. In studies 4 to 6, we took the examination into the field. Specifically, Studies 4 and 5 used nationwide samples of the Jewish–Israeli public and were conducted in two opposite contexts within the Israeli–Palestinian conflict— one with a positive potential (conflict resolution efforts, Study 4) and the other with a negative potential (during wartime, Study 5), and examined how the relationship between policy support and positive (empathy) as well as negative (anger) emotional processes was moderated by ideology in each context. Finally, in Study 6, we extended our external validity by examining a different population—that of Palestinian citizens of Israel (PCIs)—in the context of protests against a controversial governmental plan that could harm this population. Here, we examined how ideology moderated the relationship between fear of the outgroup and support for political compromises. In all of these cases, we hypothesized that changes in emotion would be associated with changes in policy support mostly among leftists, whereas rightists would remain rigid in their policy support regardless of levels of experienced emotion.

Study 1: The Interactive Effect of Ideology and Induced Empathy on Support for Policies Toward the Adversary in a Conflict

In Study 1, we focused on intergroup empathy, an emotional phenomenon brought on by the comprehension of another's affective state and associated with a motivation to improve others' situation (see Cikara, Bruneau, & Saxe, 2011). Empathy should thus predict support for conciliatory outgroup-directed policies, and this assumption is supported by empirical examinations in this field (e.g., Čehajić, Brown, & González, 2009; Tam et al., 2008). We set out to investigate whether ideology would moderate the effects of empathy on support for political policies, in accordance with our hypothesis. To avoid any direct manipulation of policy support, we chose to manipulate empathy using a scenario unrelated to the political policies. We proposed that inducing empathy toward an outgroup member, even in a scenario unrelated to the dynamic of the intergroup relations, may lead to changes in support for concrete intergroup policies among political leftists, but not among political rightists.

Method

Participants. A sample of 175 Jewish Israelis (97 females and 2 not indicated; ages 18-87, *M* = 37.49, *SD* = 13.94) participated in the study on a voluntary basis, all drawn from the general population and two academic institutions. Of this initial sample,

one was excluded from the analysis due to unreasonable questionnaire-completion time (more than 1 hr), leaving a final sample of 174 participants (97 female and 2 unindicated; ages 18-87, $M = 37.57$, $SD = 13.94$). Politically, the sample leaned to the left, with 36.8% of the participants identifying themselves as moderately to extremely rightist, 14.9% as centrist, and 48.3% as moderately to extremely leftist.

Procedure. Participants agreed to participate in a study on memory and attitudes toward current events and were randomly assigned to either an *empathy* condition ($n = 91$) or a *control* condition ($n = 83$). They then filled in a questionnaire online or in paper form. The manipulation was a short text, presented as a true account, describing a West Bank Palestinian boy named Amir, who dreams of a career as a soccer player and has recently begun experiencing knee pain. In the control condition, these pains are diagnosed as "a minor stress fracture," requiring him to avoid playing soccer for only a fortnight, with no long-term consequences. In the empathy condition, however, Amir's pains are diagnosed as a metastasized and spreading tumor, demanding surgery and possible amputation, and forcing Amir's parents to tell him he will never play soccer again. The text was followed by a manipulation check and items measuring support for conciliatory policies toward Palestinians.

Measures. As a check of our experimental manipulation, we included a measure of *empathy*. Participants were asked to indicate, on a scale ranging from 1 = *not at all* to 6 = *very much so*, to what extent they experienced each of seven emotional phenomena toward the protagonist (empathy, sympathy, concern, sadness, anxiety, compassion, and indifference, which was reverse scored). A mean empathy score was computed from all seven items (Cronbach's α = .91).

Support for conciliatory policies toward the Palestinians was rated on an eight-item scale tapping into policies that would improve the lives of Palestinians under occupation, or promote or deter an end to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Participants were asked to indicate to what extent (anchored at 1 = *strongly oppose* and 6 = *strongly support*) they supported each policy, and responses were averaged to create a single score (Cronbach's α = .89). None of these items referred to any direct help to the Palestinian boy.[1]

Either before or after the above, participants were also asked to respond to several demographic questions, reporting their sex, age, household income (on a scale ranging from 1 = *much below average* to 5 = *much above average*), level of religiosity (on a scale ranging from 1 = *secular* to 5 = *ultra-orthodox*), and political ideology (measured by asking participants to rank their political orientation on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *extreme right* to 7 = *extreme left*). Importantly, neither the questionnaire's administration format nor its counterbalanced order moderated our findings.
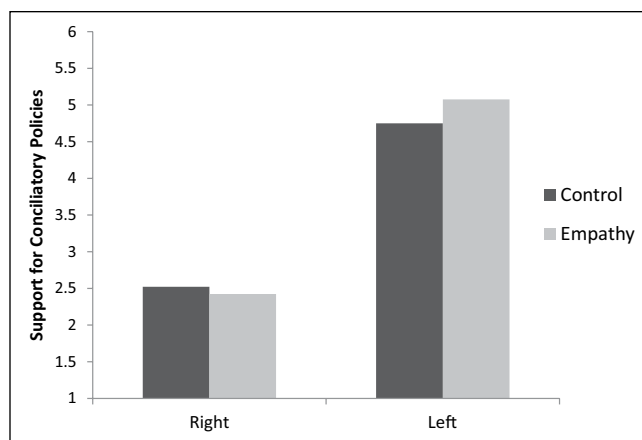

Figure 1. The interactive influence of ideology and the empathy manipulation on support for conciliatory policies toward the Palestinians in Study 1.

Results and Discussion

The manipulation's effect on empathy. To examine the manipulation's effect on our manipulation check for levels of empathy and whether this effect was moderated by ideology, we used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS bootstrapping command (Model 1) to test the conditional effect, $R^2 = .44$, $F(3, 170) = 44.25$, $p < .0001$. This regression analysis revealed a highly significant main effect for the manipulation ($B = 1.44$, standard error [SE] = 0.14, $t = 10.57$, $p < .0001$; confidence interval [CI] = [1.17, 1.71]), which was interestingly not moderated by ideology ($B_{interaction} = -.14$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = -1.57$, n.s.; CI = [−0.32, 0.04]), indicating the manipulation was effective for all participants, regardless of their political ideology.

The manipulation's moderated effect on policy support. After establishing that the empathy manipulation was effective in inducing empathy regardless of political ideology, we turned to examine our hypothesis that ideology would nonetheless moderate its effect on policy support, with only leftists affected by the manipulation. Using the same procedure as above, $R^2 = .78$, $F(3, 158) = 190.3$, $p < .0001$, we found no significant main effect for the empathy manipulation on policy support ($B = .11$, $SE = 0.1$, $t = 1.12$, n.s.; CI = [−0.09, 0.31]). However, as we hypothesized, we found a significant interactive effect for ideology and the manipulation on support for conciliatory policies ($B_{interaction} = .14$, $SE = 0.07$, $t = 2.08$, $p < .05$; CI = [0.01, 0.27]; see Figure 1). The conditional effects were also in line with our hypothesis: Although there was no significant effect for the manipulation on those one standard deviation below the mean ideology score (hereafter termed *rightists*; $B = -.1$, $SE = 0.14$, $t = -0.68$, n.s.; CI = [−0.38, 0.19]), it significantly increased support for conciliatory policies among those one standard deviation above the mean score (hereafter termed *leftists*; $B = .33$,

SE = 0.14, *t* = 2.26, *p* < .05; CI = [0.04, 0.61]). Controlling for the counterbalanced order of the questionnaire did not undermine this interaction ($B_{interaction}$ = .14, *SE* = 0.07, *t* = 2.06, *p* < .05; CI = [0.01, 0.27]) nor did such an analysis undermine any of the findings reported below for Studies 2 and 3, which also included a counterbalanced design.

Study 1 thus supported our hypothesis that inducing outgroup-directed empathy would influence leftists' positions, but not rightists' positions, despite affecting levels of empathy for all participants. Nonetheless, because the outgroup in question in Study 1 was the adversary in an intractable conflict—perceptions of which are central to ideological self-placement in such contexts—it may be difficult to draw wider inferences as to the interactive effect of emotions and ideology on outgroup-directed policies more generally. Study 2 was designed to address this limitation.

Study 2: The Interactive Effect of Ideology and Induced Empathy on Support for Policies Toward Asylum Seekers

Our next study was designed to examine the effects of empathy toward a different kind of outgroup—one that is not seen as the adversary in an intractable conflict. Specifically, Study 2 was conducted in reference to African asylum seekers in Israel and support for policies that may improve their situation. As in Study 1, we hypothesized that induced empathy would increase support for humanitarian outgroup-directed policies[2] only among leftists, while having little effect on rightists' policy support.

Method

Participants. One hundred and seventy Jewish Israelis (91 females and 1 unindicated; ages 21-86, *M* = 38.07, *SD* = 13.19) participated in the study on a voluntary basis, drawn from the same population used in Study 1. Of this initial sample, five were excluded due to unreasonable questionnaire-completion time (less than 3 min or more than 1 hr), creating a final sample of 165 participants (88 females and 1 unindicated; ages 21-86, *M* = 37.77, *SD* = 13.11). Politically, this sample also leaned to the left: 30.3% of the participants identified themselves as moderately to extremely rightist, 23% as centrist, and 46.7% as moderately to extremely leftist.

Procedure. The procedure used was nearly identical to the one used in Study 1, albeit with two changes: (a) the protagonist's identity—he was now named Simon and identified as the son of Sudanese asylum seeker—and (b) we introduced a new measure of policy support, referring specifically to government policies that could improve humanitarian conditions for asylum seekers in Israel. Participants were randomly
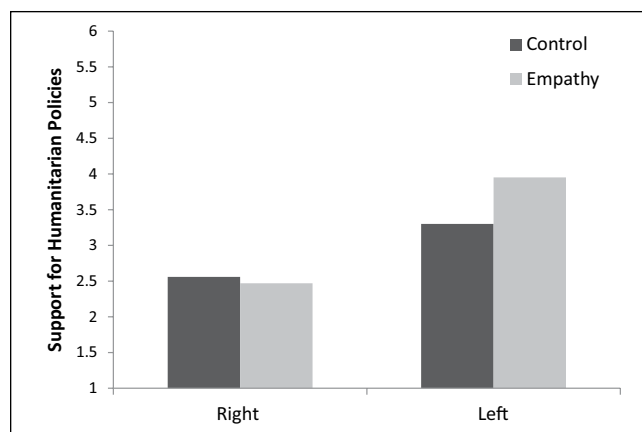

Figure 2. The interactive influence of ideology and the empathy manipulation on support for humanitarian policies toward asylum seekers in Study 2.

assigned to either an *empathy* condition (*n* = 79) or a *control* condition (*n* = 86) and filled in a questionnaire online or in paper form. The questionnaire's order was again counterbalanced. As in study 1, neither the questionnaire's administration format nor its order moderated our findings.

Measures. The manipulation check was identical to the one used in Study 1, except for the protagonist's name, which was changed in accordance with the manipulation (Cronbach's α = .92).

Support for humanitarian policies toward asylum seekers was rated on a four-item measure detailing policies that would improve conditions for asylum seekers in Israel (e.g., "Israeli aid to asylum seekers in terms of funds and training in the field of health"), ranked as in Study 1 (Cronbach's α = .94). Either before or after the above, participants responded to several demographic questions, as in Study 1.

Results and Discussion

The manipulation's effect on empathy. We first examined whether the manipulation had the desired effect on empathy, as in Study 1, R^2 = .28, $F(3, 161)$ = 21.93, *p* < .0001, confirming that it did (*B* = 1.04, *SE* = 0.16, *t* = 6.46, *p* < .0001; CI = [0.72, 1.35]). This effect was not moderated by political ideology ($B_{interaction}$ = .17, *SE* = 0.11, *t* = 1.54, n.s.; CI = [−0.05, 0.38]).

The manipulation's moderated effect on policy support. We used the same method to test our hypothesized interaction, R^2 = .24, $F(3, 156)$ = 16.26, *p* < .0001, finding that the manipulation did not influence support for humanitarian policies toward asylum seekers in itself (*B* = 0.28, *SE* = 0.17, *t* = 1.62, n.s.; CI = [−0.06, 0.62]), but its effect was, as hypothesized, significantly moderated by political ideology ($B_{interaction}$ = .25, *SE* = 0.12, *t* = 2.14, *p* < .05; CI = [0.02, 0.48]; see Figure 2).

Furthermore, as hypothesized, only leftists' policy support was significantly higher in the empathy condition than in the control condition ($B = .65$, $SE = 0.24$, $t = 2.66$, $p < .01$; CI = [0.18, 1.13]), with no significant difference among rightists ($B = −.09$, $SE = 0.24$, $t = −0.37$, n.s.; CI = [−0.57, 0.39]).

Study 2 not only provided additional support for our hypothesis that the effects of emotion in the context of intergroup conflict are moderated by ideology, but also extended the findings of Study 1 in showing the same emotional influence on leftists but not rightists even with regard to an outgroup not seen as an adversary and not intimately associated with the dominant ideology. Nonetheless, Studies 1 and 2 had several important limitations. First, they examined only one intergroup emotional process, namely empathy. Therefore, although interesting on their own, it is impossible to draw inferences from these studies to the wider interactive relationship between ideology and emotional processes in conflict. Second, the emotion examined was associated with an increase in support for constructive policies, making it unclear whether emotions that could decrease such support would also prove more influential over leftists. Finally, both emotion-eliciting events investigated so far were identical. It may be that other types of events, with greater bearing on the ingroup, would produce different patterns.

Study 3: The Interactive Effect of Ideology and Induced Despair on Support for Intergroup Gestures

To address the shortcomings of Studies 1 and 2, Study 3 examined the interactive influence of ideology and despair on support for policies. Despair is a context-targeted emotion brought on by an inability to visualize the achievement of a meaningful goal, associated with an unwillingness to act to achieve this goal (Snyder, 1994). For these reasons, despair should be associated with decreased support for policies that might initiate changes in the situation (for empirical support, see Cohen-Chen et al., 2014). The context selected for Study 3 was the Israeli–Palestinian peace process, in which many failed attempts have created fertile ground for feelings of despair, allowing us to manipulate this emotion. As in the previous studies, we hypothesized that induced despair would lead to changes—this time a decrease—in support for conciliatory policies among leftists, but not among rightists.

Method

Participants. One hundred and fifty five Jewish–Israeli participants (73 females; ages 18-85, $M = 33.67$, $SD = 14.05$) were recruited as in Studies 1 and 2. Of these, 1 was excluded for taking more than an hour to complete the questionnaire, 6 because they failed to follow the instructions, and 2 due to extreme scores on the despair measure (over 2.5 standard deviations from the mean), leaving a final sample of 146

participants (76 males, 70 females; ages 18-85, $M = 34.14$, $SD = 14.33$). Politically, the sample was quite balanced, with 40.4% of the participants identifying themselves as moderately to extremely rightist, 25.3% as centrist, and 34.2% as moderately to extremely leftist.

Procedure. Participants were randomly assigned to either a *despair* condition ($n = 82$) or a *control* condition ($n = 64$) and filled in either an online or paper questionnaire. The study was carried out shortly after a visit by U.S. President Barack Obama to the region and amid talk of renewing Israeli–Palestinian negotiations, but months before renewed negotiations were announced. The manipulation was a fabricated report from a top Israeli news site, revealing details on an alleged secret meeting held by Israeli and Palestinian leaders at Obama's initiative during his visit. According to the report, Obama had presented the parties with a new peace initiative that had the potential to break the stalemate, leading to high hopes among representatives of both sides. In the control condition, aides to both leaders refused to disclose any details on the follow-up to these meetings. In the despair condition, however, it is revealed that the talks collapsed within 24 hours, leading both sides to "believe that the impasse is now greater" than it had ever been in the past. The text was followed by a reading comprehension check, a manipulation check, and items measuring support for Israeli gestures to Palestinians.

Measures. Despair, our manipulation check, was measured using a five-item measure tapping feelings of despair, disappointment, and pessimism, rated on the same scale used for empathy in the previous studies (Cronbach's α = .77).

Support for gestures was rated using three items (e.g., "As a gesture for peace, Israel should remove a third of the roadblocks in the Palestinian territories"), ranked as in Studies 1 and 2 (Cronbach's α = .83). Participants also responded to several demographic questions, and the overall order was counterbalanced as in the previous studies.

Results and Discussion

The manipulation's effect on despair. We again first examined whether the manipulation had the desired effect on emotional reactions, as in the above studies, $R^2 = .21$, $F(3, 142) = 12.46$, $p < .0001$, confirming that it raised levels of despair ($B = .34$, $SE = 0.15$, $t = 2.38$, $p = .02$; CI = [0.06, 0.68]). This effect was not moderated by political ideology ($B_{interaction} = −.12$, $SE = 0.12$, $t = −1.03$, n.s.; CI = [−0.35, 0.11]).

The manipulation's moderated effect on policy support. We used the same method to test our hypothesized interactive effect on support for gestures, $R^2 = .42$, $F(3, 142) = 34.43$, $p < .0001$, finding that the manipulation did not influence support for gestures in itself ($B = −.14$, $SE = 0.18$, $t = −.78$, n.s.; CI = [−0.49, 0.21]), but its effect was, as hypothesized,
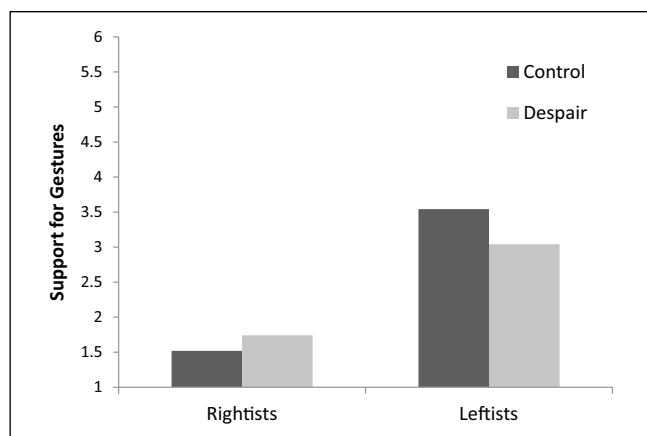
Figure 3. The interactive influence of ideology and the despair manipulation on support for gestures to the Palestinians in Study 3.

significantly moderated by political ideology ($B_{interaction}$ = −.26, SE = 0.13, t = −1.98, p < .05; CI = [−0.54, −0.001]; see Figure 3). Furthermore, as hypothesized, only leftists' policy support was marginally significantly lower in the despair condition than in the control condition (B = −.5, SE = 0.25, t = −1.97, p = .05; CI = [−1, 0.002]), with no significant difference among rightists (B = .22, SE = 0.25, t = .88, n.s.; CI = [−0.28, 0.73]).

Study 3 thus provided further support for our hypothesis, demonstrating that inducing a negative emotion, associated with an unwillingness to support policies toward change, also led to changes in policy support only among leftists, just as we found for empathy. However, all three studies used a controlled experimental design that presented a made-up account, limiting our ability to draw applied inferences from our findings to real-world conflict situations.

Study 4: A Field Examination of the Interactive Effect of Ideology and (Negative and Positive) Emotional Reactions to Emerging Peace Efforts

To augment the meaning of our findings in Studies 1 to 3, we turned to a different methodological approach: a correlational design addressing real-life developments and a representative sample of Jewish Israelis. To this end, Study 4 included a re-examination of data collected ahead of a major attempt to reignite Israeli–Palestinian peace negotiations—the Annapolis peace talks launched in 2007 (see Halperin & Gross, 2011, for details). We chose this context because it provides one extreme example of conflict-related circumstances, holding potential for tangible positive developments. As with all major conflict events, this event prompted both positive and negative intergroup emotions, allowing us to examine our hypothesis that ideology would moderate the relationships between emotional processes and policy

support in the field. Furthermore, these data allowed us to examine whether the effect found in the previous studies, by which increased emotion was associated with changes in positions only among leftists, could be replicated in a real-world context, and also generalized to anger, a negative intergroup emotion brought on by the perception of another group's actions as unjust or unfair (Mackie et al., 2000) and associated with a desire to confront or attack the anger-evoking group (Halperin & Gross, 2011; Mackie et al., 2000). We hypothesized that high levels of empathy would be associated with increased support for compromises among leftists, while having little influence over rightists, whereas high levels of anger would be associated with diminished support for compromises only among leftists, bringing their positions closer to rightists.

Method

Participants. Study 4 used a nationwide sample of 501 Jewish Israelis (253 females) who voluntarily participated in a phone survey in October 2007, 3 weeks prior to the Annapolis Conference. Interviews were conducted by an experienced Israeli survey institute (the Machshov Institute). A random sampling within stratified subgroups was used to obtain a representative sample of Jews living in Israel at the time. Almost half (46.3%) of the respondents considered themselves moderately to extremely rightist, 23.2% said they were centrist, and 18.4% self-identified as moderately to extremely left-wing. Sixty-one participants (12.2%) did not disclose their political orientation and were thus excluded from the analysis.

Procedure. Oral informed consent was obtained at the onset of the interview. After several unrelated "warm-up" questions, participants responded to various psychological measures, and then read a fabricated news article describing the upcoming summit. The article was presented as an editorial from Israel's most popular daily newspaper, containing facts about the summit and providing an overview of the pre-summit negotiations. Its content was strictly factual, and it was not worded with the explicit goal of arousing certain emotions—although such information may have an automatic emotional impact in the charged context of intractable conflict. Following the text, participants rated their emotions toward the Palestinians in light of the information presented and their level of support for compromises during the upcoming negotiations.

Measures. Political ideology was measured as in Studies 1 to 3, by asking participants to rank their political orientation on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*extreme right*) to 7 (*extreme left*).

Empathy toward the Palestinians was assessed using two items (Empathy and Compassion) ranked on the same scales used for the emotion items in the previous studies (Cronbach's α = .73).

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among Variables in Study 4.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Support for compromises	2.47	1.23	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2. Empathy	2.36	1.42	.26**	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
3. Anger	3.25	1.58	−.3**	.04	1	—	—	—	—	—
4. Political ideology	3.45	1.43	.57**	.22**	−.43**	1	—	—	—	—
5. Religiosity	2.05	1.27	−.37**	−.09	.25**	−.48**	1	—	—	—
6. Income	3.21	1.29	.07	−.03	−.11*	.14**	−.17**	1	—	—
7. Education	4.27	1.45	.01	−.12**	−.25**	.15**	−.06	.27**	1	—
8. Sex	—	—	.03	.03	.04	.05	.1*	−.15**	.03	1

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Anger toward the Palestinians was measured using three items (Anger, Hostility, and Annoyance) rated on the same scale (Cronbach's α = .84).

Support for compromises in the context of the upcoming negotiations was assessed using a four-item measure, with each item representing a key issue on which Israel would potentially need to compromise to reach a peace agreement. Participants rated their support on the same scale reported for the previous measurements of policy support (Cronbach's α = .69).

The survey also included several demographic questions: sex, household income, and level of religiosity, all using identical measures to those used in the previous studies.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables. We examined the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations among our variables (see Table 1). Support for compromises was correlated with both empathy (positively) and anger (negatively) and also with political ideology (leftists were more supportive of compromises than rightists). Although levels of emotion were also correlated with political ideology, we were interested in examining the moderating power of ideology on the relationship between emotional processes and positions beyond its own correlation with these emotions.

Ideology, emotional processes, and support for compromises. To examine how ideology moderated the relationship between empathy toward the outgroup and support for compromises, we again used PROCESS: Model 1; $R^2 = .36$, $F(3, 435) = 82$, $p < .0001$. Support for compromises was predicted by both ideology ($B = .45$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = 13.06$, $p < .0001$; CI = [0.38, 0.51]) and empathy ($B = .13$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = 3.66$, $p < .001$; CI = [0.06, 0.19]). As per our hypothesis, we also found a significant interaction between ideology and empathy in their effect on support for compromises ($B = .05$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = 2.55$, $p = .01$; CI = [0.01, 0.09]; see Figure 4), and the conditional effects revealed no significant relationship between empathy and support for compromises among rightists ($B = .13$,
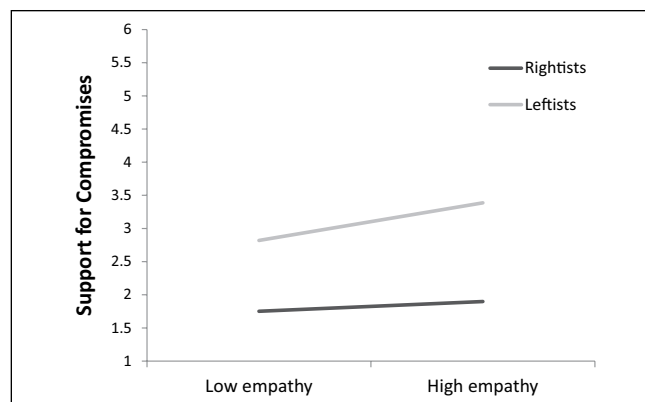

Figure 4. The interactive influence of ideology and empathy toward the Palestinians on support for compromises in Study 4.

$SE = 0.05$, $t = 1.07$, n.s.; CI = [−0.04, 0.15]), whereas for leftists, the positive relationship was significant ($B = .2$, $SE = 0.04$, $t = 4.79$, $p < .0001$; CI = [0.12, 0.28]).

We next examined how ideology moderated the relationship between anger toward the outgroup and support for compromises, using the same procedure, $R^2 = .35$, $F(3, 434) = 77.36$, $p < .0001$. The analysis revealed that ideology ($B = .43$, $SE = 0.04$, $t = 11.49$, $p < .0001$; CI = [0.36, 0.5]) and anger ($B = −.1$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = −2.2$ $p = .005$; CI = [−0.16, −0.03]) both significantly predicted support for compromises. More importantly, it supported our hypothesis: The interaction term had a significant effect on support for compromises ($B = −.06$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = −2.94$, $p < .005$; CI = [−0.1, −0.02]), indicating that the relationship between anger and policy support is indeed moderated by ideology. An analysis of the conditional effects (see Figure 5) revealed no significant relationship between intergroup anger and support for compromises among rightists ($B = −.01$, $SE = 0.04$, $t = −0.14$, n.s.; CI = [−0.09, 0.08]). However, the negative relationship between anger and support for compromises among leftists was robust ($B = −.18$, $SE = 0.05$, $t = −3.9$, $p = .0001$; CI = [−0.28, −0.09]).

To rule out the possibility that the non-significance of the relationship between each of the emotional processes and
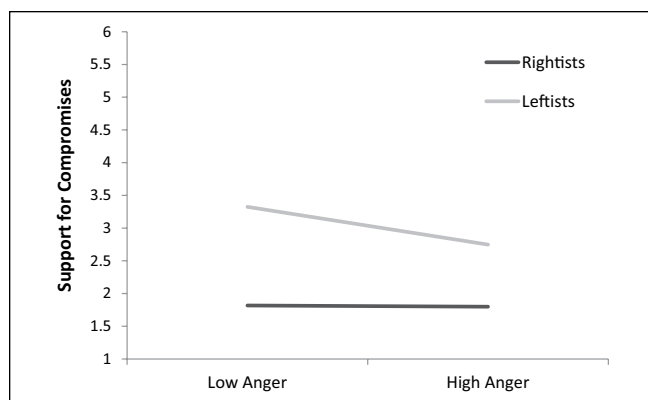
Figure 5. The interactive influence of ideology and anger toward the Palestinians on support for compromises in Study 4.

policy support among rightists stemmed from limited variance in one or more of these variables, we ran two Levene's tests for homogeneity of variances for the residuals of the interaction analyses, comparing the residuals across the levels of the ideology variable. Applying a Bonferroni correction to account for the multiple analyses, we compared the significance of these two analyses with a critical p value of .025, and found both analyses to be non-significant (Ideology × Empathy: Levene's statistic = 1.66, n.s.; Ideology × Anger: Levene's statistic = 2.3, n.s.), indicating no substantial differences in variance across the ideological spectrum in the moderation analyses.

Study 4 revealed that, even in real-world circumstance reaching beyond contrived lab settings, changes in levels of empathy and anger toward the outgroup correspond to changes in policy support differently for people of different ideologies. Nonetheless, these findings support our hypothesis only with regard to conflict events with a positive future potential. In addition, Study 4 does not address an alternative explanation, that rightists and leftists differ in their attitude strength, rather than in the rigidity with which they hold these attitudes—and that this difference drives our above findings. A second alternative explanation is that ideology simply reflects group identification (with rightist ideology reflecting stronger identification), and that differing levels of identification are actually driving differences in responsiveness to emotion. Study 5 was designed with these limitations in mind.

Study 5: A Field Examination of the Interactive Effect of Ideology and (Negative and Positive) Emotional Reactions During Wartime

Study 5 was carried out with several goals in the follow-up to the above findings. First, it used a radically different, negative real-world conflict-related context. Second, it used a two-wave design, allowing us to measure ideology in

isolation from the emotion-eliciting event. This design also allowed us to include and control for various measures of attitude strength and a measure of group identification. Finally, to ensure that the surveying method used in Study 4 (phone interviews) did not affect our findings, Study 5 used an anonymous response format (online questionnaires), which may have advantages over a phone survey in real-world contexts because people may be reluctant to share their true emotional experiences with a stranger.

The onset of the 2012 Israeli–Palestinian war in the Gaza Strip brought with it a major flare-up in violence that directly affected both the residents of Gaza and Israelis living in the range of Palestinian missiles. The war thus provided the radically different context needed to test whether our general hypothesis would also be relevant in the face of highly negative conflict-related developments and with regard to support for aggressive policies. We again hypothesized that ideology would moderate the relationship between intergroup emotional processes and policy support, this time with regard to the war, such that rightists' policy support would be least related to their emotions.

Method

Participants. Study 5 was embedded in a survey administered by the research firm Midgam Project (MP) and first distributed online in February 2012 (T1, during a period of relative calm) to a nationwide sample of 808 Jewish Israelis, randomly drawn from the general MP panel. This opt-in panel covers Israelis aged 17 years and older. In November 2012, during the war in Gaza, we approached this sample again. Of all first-wave participants, 402 (203 females; ages 18-81, $M = 45.65$, $SD = 15.4$) completed the wartime questionnaire (T2), yielding a 49.75% completion rate. This relatively low completion rate stemmed from the difficulty in obtaining responses during wartime and the limited time frame in which T2 was administered (less than 48 hr). Nonetheless, we found no dropout bias in the sample. As in Study 4, almost half (47.4%) of the respondents identified themselves as moderately to extremely rightist, 30% as centrists, and 22.6% as moderately to extremely left-wing.

Procedure. Oral informed consent was obtained at the onset of the online questionnaire. In T1, participants responded to various background questions, including political ideology. The T2 questionnaire was formulated to specifically address the ongoing war, and participants were asked to report their resulting emotions and support for policies.

Measures. *Political ideology* was measured in T1 on a 7-point scale, as it was measured in previous studies.

Anger toward the outgroup and *Empathy toward the outgroup* were measured in T2, each through a single item, with participants asked to indicate levels of intergroup emotion in light of war. We opted for single-item measures because an

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among Variables in Study 5.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Support for aggression	4.41	0.98	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2. Empathy	2.67	1.39	−.42**	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3. Anger	4.73	1.36	.47**	−.42**	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
4. Political ideology	3.54	1.3	−.54**	.41**	−.37**	1	—	—	—	—	—
5. Religiosity	1.61	0.86	.34**	−.23**	.15**	−.46**	1	—	—	—	—
6. Income	4.73	13.27	.04	.002	.03	.02	−.03	1	—	—	—
7. Education	7.73	4.85	−.11*	.05	−.06	.07	−.08	.33**	1	—	—
8. Age	45.35	15.45	−.06	.09	.01	.24**	−.16**	.07	.09	1	—
9. Sex	—	—	−.09	.11*	−.004	.05	.04	.09	.06	−.06	1

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

examination of the Study 4 data indicated that one item for each emotion was sufficient for identifying the interaction and due to the urgency of administering T2 before the war was over.

Support for Aggression as part of the war was assessed using a five-item measure tackling different aspects of support for the war and the use of aggression within it (i.e., belief in the merit of military assault, justification of the war, support for airstrikes, and tolerance of "collateral damage" to civilian lives), using the same 6-point scale used to measure policy support in Study 1 (Cronbach's α = .77).

In T1, Participants also responded to several variables related to dimensions of attitude strength: *Certainty* (i.e., "To what extent are you certain of your positions on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict?"), *Importance* (i.e., "To what extent is your position on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict important to you personally?"), and overall *strength* (i.e., "How strongly do you experience your attitudes on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict?"), all ranked on the same scale as the emotion items; and *Knowledge* (i.e., "Do you consider yourself a 'politically knowledgeable' individual, meaning you follow the news and know all central occurrences?"), ranked on a 5-point scale (anchored at 1 = *not at all* and 5 = *highly politically knowledgeable*). They also responded to a four-item measure of group identification (e.g., "To what extent do you feel emotionally attached to the Jewish people?"), ranked on the same scale as the emotion items (Cronbach's α = .94).

Finally, several demographic questions were also included in T1: age, sex, household income, and level of religiosity, using identical measures to those reported earlier.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables. We again examined the means, standard deviations, and correlations among our variables (see Table 2). Support for aggression was generally high and was highly correlated with both empathy (negatively) and anger (positively), as well as political ideology (rightists were more supportive of aggression than leftists). It is again worth noting that levels of intergroup
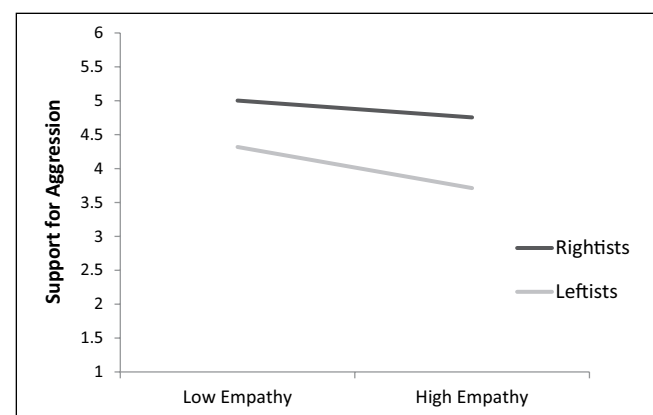
Figure 6. The interactive influence of ideology and empathy toward the Palestinians on support for aggression in Study 5.

emotion were also correlated with ideology.

Ideology, emotional processes, and support for aggression. We used the same procedure used above to examine how ideology moderated the relationship between empathy and support for aggression, $R^2 = .34$, $F(3, 397) = 69.51$, $p < .0001$. The analysis revealed significant main effects for ideology ($B = −.33$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = −9.88$, $p < .0001$; CI = [−0.4, −0.27]) and empathy ($B = −.15$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = −4.85$, $p < .0001$; CI = [−0.21, −0.09]) on support for the war, as well as a significant interaction ($B = −.05$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = −2.47$, $p = .01$; CI = [−0.09, −0.01]; see Figure 6). Although significant conditional effects were found among both ideological groups, the effect among leftists ($B = −.22$, $SE = 0.04$, $t = −5.67$, $p < .0001$; CI = [−0.29, −0.14]) was stronger than the one found among rightists ($B = −.09$, $SE = 0.04$, $t = −2.96$, $p < .05$; CI = [−0.17, −0.004]), as indicated by the significance of the interaction. Study 2 thus produced similar patterns to those found in our previous studies, showing that empathy was most associated with policy support among leftists, pushing their positions away from those of rightists.

We next examined how ideology moderated the relationship between anger and support for aggression, using the
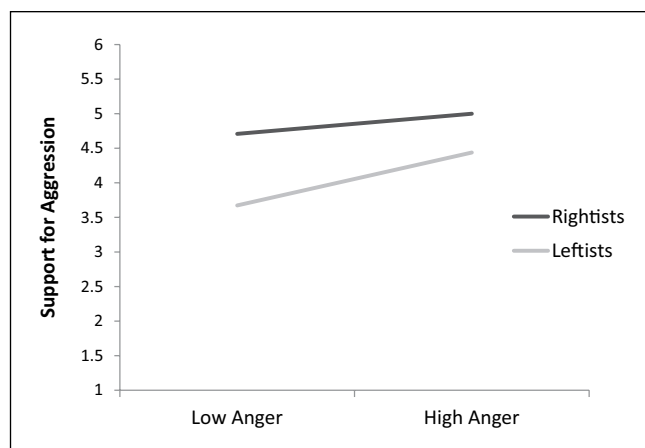
Figure 7. The interactive influence of ideology and anger toward the Palestinians on support for aggression in Study 5.

same procedure, $R^2 = .39$, $F(3, 397) = 85.52$, $p < .0001$. We again found significant main effects of ideology ($B = -.31$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = -9.62$, $p < .0001$; CI = $[-0.37, -0.24]$) and anger ($B = .19$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = 6.09$, $p < .0001$; CI = $[0.13, 0.26]$) on policy support, and also supported our hypothesis, revealing a significant interaction on support for aggression ($B = .07$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = 3.36$, $p < .001$; CI = $[0.03, 0.11]$; see Figure 7). Further examination revealed that although the conditional effect of anger on support for the war among rightists was significant ($B = .11$, $SE = 0.05$, $t = 2.29$, $p < .05$; CI = $[0.02, 0.2]$), the positive relationship among leftists was stronger ($B = .28$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = 8.18$, $p < .0001$; CI = $[0.21, 0.35]$), as indicated by the effect size. Thus, anger was associated with policy support more among leftists than among rightists.

To ensure that the above findings do not simply reflect ideological differences in attitude strength, we first examined the correlations between ideology and the attitude certainty, importance, overall strength, and knowledge items (see Table 3). We found several significant but weak correlations (ranging from a non-significant $r = .04$ to a significant $r = -.2$), such that leftist ideology was negatively related to measures of strength. These findings were anticipated, as these variables may partially tap into the rigidity associated with right-wing beliefs. Nonetheless, even when controlling for all four items, the interactive effects found for ideology and empathy ($B_{interaction} = -.05$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = -2.26$, $p < .05$; CI = $[-0.09, -0.01]$) and ideology and anger ($B_{interaction} = .07$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = 3.44$, $p < .001$; CI = $[0.03, 0.11]$) on support for aggression remained significant, with the conditional effects for leftists stronger than the conditional effects for rightists in both analyses.

Finally, to ensure that ideology did not serve as a proxy for identification, we examined the correlation between the two variables and found a significant correlation ($r = -.44$, $p < .001$), such that higher identifiers were more rightist. Nonetheless, controlling for identification also did not

undermine our above findings, neither for the moderated relationship between empathy and policy support ($B_{interaction} = -.04$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = -2.12$, $p < .05$; CI = $[-0.08, -0.003]$), nor for the moderated relationship between anger and policy support ($B_{interaction} = -.06$, $SE = 0.02$, $t = -2.79$, $p < .01$; CI = $[0.02, 0.1]$). Again, the conditional effects for leftists were stronger than those found for rightists in both analyses.

Study 5 provided further support for our hypothesis, revealing that ideology moderates the relationship between intergroup emotional processes and policy support even in times of direct confrontation. The relationship between emotional processes and policy support was stronger among leftists than among rightists, even when controlling for various facets of attitude strength and group identification. Although the above studies all provided support for our hypothesis, all also used the same population—Jewish Israelis—thereby limiting the external validity of our findings. Another limitation of these studies is that they did not address an emotion that has received much attention in the literature on ideology—fear (for a review, see Jost & Amodio, 2012). We therefore conducted a sixth study.

Study 6: A Field Examination of the Interactive Effect of Ideology and Fear Among PCIs

We conducted Study 6 with two main goals in mind. The first was examining a novel population so as to ensure the effects found above are not population-dependent. We therefore focused on PCIs during a real-world event relevant to this group: ongoing opposition to a governmental plan—the Prawer Plan—that could have led to the displacement of tens of thousands of Palestinian Bedouin. The plan was officially aimed at resolving the outstanding issues of land ownership between the Bedouin and the State of Israel, but was criticized by Palestinians as being discriminatory, one-sided, and harmful. PCIs differ from Jewish Israelis in several important ways. Most importantly, their group stands at the opposite side of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. In addition, they are a minority civilian population, thus yielding less political power, and such power difference leads to differences on various intergroup psychological phenomena (see Saguy, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2008; Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009). The second goal was expanding our examination to include fear, an emotion often linked to rightist ideology, with findings demonstrating that rightists are more reactive to fear-inducing stimuli (see Jost & Amodio, 2012). These findings may lead to an opposite hypothesis from ours—that rightists' (compared with leftists') policy support will be more related to fear. Therefore, focusing on fear offers the most stringent test of our general hypothesis.

Preparations within the Israeli government (which chiefly represents the Jewish majority's interests and includes no political representation for the Palestinian community) for the legislation of a law based on the Prawer Plan provided us

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Between Ideology and Attitude Strength in Study 5.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Ideology	3.54	1.30	1	—	—	—	—	—
2. Attitude certainty	4.72	1.16	−.20**	1	—	—	—	—
3. Attitude importance	4.49	1.22	−.11*	.6**	1	—	—	—
4. Overall attitude strength	4.21	1.21	−.19**	.63**	.73**	1	—	—
5. Knowledge	3.24	1.02	.04	.34**	.38**	.31**	1	—
6. Identification	5.31	1.03	−.44**	.14**	.15**	.18**	.04	1

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

with a rare opportunity to examine our hypothesis among this population in response to real-time developments. Although the Bedouin constitute only a small subgroup of the Palestinian minority in Israel, the PCI population as a whole mobilized in opposition to the plan and voiced clear fears that the forced relocation of Bedouin signaled the Jewish majority's broader intentions to displace Palestinians from their homes so as to maintain Jewish dominance in the country.

Method

Participants. Two hundred and three PCIs (113 females and 5 unindicated; ages 17-65, $M = 29.39$, $SD = 10.85$) were recruited from the general population and participated in the study voluntarily. Of this initial sample, one was excluded due to extreme scores on the dependent variable (over 2.5 standard deviations from the mean), yielding a final sample of 202 participants (113 females and 5 unindicated; ages 17-65, $M = 29.44$, $SD = 10.86$). This sample included both Bedouin ($n = 56$) and non-Bedouin ($n = 145$) Palestinians living in different parts of the country, including more traditional populations that are often ignored in social scientific research. Such samples are hard to come by as Israeli polling companies have a limited capacity to reach this population, and so participants were recruited with the help of Palestinian recruiters in several key PCI population centers.

Procedure. Participants completed a questionnaire either online or in paper form. The questionnaire included a measure of conflict-specific ideology (because Palestinians, by virtue of their identity, are automatically categorized as belonging to the "left" of Israeli politics, a right–left measure would have not been sensitive to ideological differences) and other background variables, followed by a text describing the Prawer Plan, its details, and the way in which it endangers the Palestinian population in Israel. The text was followed by items measuring fear and support for Palestinian compromises on the plan.

Measures. Conflict-supporting ideology was measured using a shortened seven-item version of the Ethos of Conflict scale (Bar-Tal, Sharvit, Halperin, & Zafran, 2012), with items

addressing various ideological beliefs relating to the Palestinian view of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (e.g., "The Palestinian people's ability to withstand the occupation is indicative of their greatness," Cronbach's α = .64).

Fear of the outgroup was measured using two items (i.e., "Fear of the Jews" and "Fear of the government") ranked on the same scale used for emotions in the above studies ($r = .75$), with participants asked to indicate levels of these emotions in light of the Prawer Plan.

Support for Compromises on the Prawer Plan was assessed using a six-item measure tackling different compromises Palestinians should make in exchange for an improved outcome for the Bedouin subgroup (e.g., "To what extent would you support the Prawer Plan if the state would offer 100,000 New Israeli Shekels in compensation for every evicted resident?"), with agreement reported on the same 6-point scale used for emotions (Cronbach's α = .81).

Several demographic questions were also included: age, sex, household income, and level of religiosity, all using identical measures to those reported in Study 1. In addition, we asked participants to indicate whether they were Bedouin or not, and we included an established six-item measure of Palestinian identification (based on Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006, Cronbach's α = .9).

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables. We examined the means, standard deviations, and correlations among our variables (see Table 4). Support for compromises was generally low and was highly correlated with conflict-supporting ideology (negatively), but not with fear of the outgroup. It is again worth noting that levels of intergroup emotion were also correlated with ideology. Support for compromises was also highly correlated with overall identification with Palestinian identity, and with belonging to the Bedouin subgroup: Bedouin were more willing to compromise with the government than were non-Bedouin participants.

Ideology, fear, and support for compromises. We turned to examine the proposed Ideology × Fear interaction, using the same regression procedure used previously, $R^2 = .23$,

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Among Variables in Study 6.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Support for compromises	2.16	0.98	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2. Fear	3.61	1.44	.08	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3. Conflict-supporting ideology	4.36	0.73	−.43**	.18**	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4. Level of religiosity	2.47	1.13	.14*	.07	.21*	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
5. Income	3.27	1.06	−.05	.01	−.03	−.12	1	—	—	—	—	—
6. Education	3.36	1.26	−.08	.02	−.04	−.3**	.27**	1	—	—	—	—
7. Age	29.44	10.86	−.15*	.12	.01	−.11	.18*	.34**	1	—	—	—
8. Sex	—	—	.002	−.04	.01	.19**	.00	−.1	−.23**	1	—	—
9. Not Bedouin/Bedouin	—	—	.32**	.13	−.08	.31**	−.16*	−.24**	−.37**	.05	1	—
10. Identification	5.02	0.96	−.45**	.15*	.71**	.09	.07	−.02	.052	−.01	−.01	1

*p < .05. **p < .01.
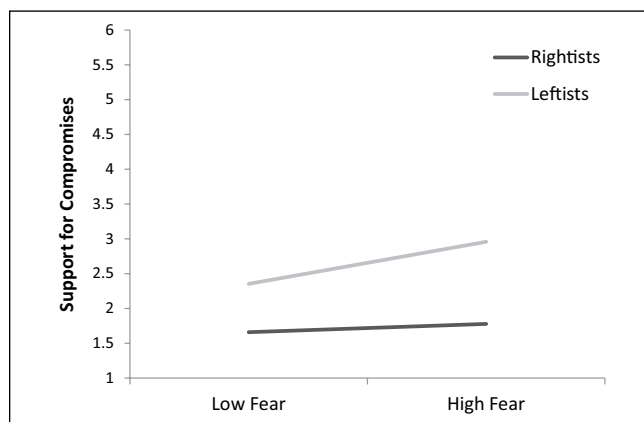
Figure 8. The interactive influence of conflict-supporting ideology and fear of the outgroup on support for compromises in Study 6.

$F(3, 197) = 19.4$, $p < .0001$. Fear was generally associated with support for compromises ($B = .13$, $SE = 0.04$, $t = 2.85$, $p < .005$; CI = [0.04, 0.21]), and, as per our hypothesis, conflict-supporting ideology was a significant moderator of this association ($B_{interaction} = −.11$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = −2.05$, $p < .05$; CI = [−0.22, −0.004]; see Figure 8). An examination of the conditional effects revealed that this interaction followed the same pattern found among Jewish Israelis: Although no association was found between fear and support for compromises for participants high in conflict-supporting ideology (i.e., rightists; $B = .04$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = 0.75$, n.s.; CI = [−0.07, 0.15]), this association was significant on the other end of this spectrum (i.e., leftists; $B = .21$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = 3.24$, $p = .001$; CI = [0.08, 0.34]). The interaction remained significant when controlling for income, whether or not participants were Bedouin, and Palestinian identification ($B = −.12$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = −2.41$, $p < .05$; CI = [−0.23, −0.02]), confirming again that ideology did not simply reflect identification. Interestingly, the more leftist participants feared the outgroup, the more they were willing to compromise with it on policies that would affect it. This

may be explained by the low power Palestinian citizens have to affect policies in Israel, making compromises one of few options at their disposal to mitigate threats posed by such policies.

The results found for PCIs are in line with our previous findings: Leftists' support for policies changes in accordance with the emotions they experience more than does rightists' support for policies. More specifically in Study 6, when experiencing varying levels of fear, rightists' support for compromises remains unchanged, but leftists' support compromises more the more fear they experience. Interestingly, this moderating effect for ideology emerges even when examining a disadvantaged population, even when focusing on an emotion often linked to rightist ideology, and even when controlling for group identification.

General Discussion

Understanding the different factors guiding political policy support has been important to socio-psychological researchers for decades. Throughout the years, the literature has identified significant roles in this process for both long-term factors, such as ideology, and intermittent effects, such as the emotions elicited by new events and information. The goal of the present research was to examine the interactive influence of ideology and emotional processes, representing these stable and variable elements, on policy support. Although it can be intuitively argued that, in a conflict, the conflict-supporting rightist ideology is more "hot-emotional" than "cold-cognitive," and therefore the positions of rightists should be most guided by emotion, there is little evidence in the literature to support this prediction. Instead, in light of indications that rightists are more rigid in their beliefs than leftists, we hypothesized that ideology would moderate the influence of emotional processes on policy support, such that leftists would be guided by their emotions more than rightists.

We tested this hypothesis using several complementary contexts and methods. By combining experimental and correlational field designs, we were able to determine causation

and examine real-time responses to significant current conflict-related events, establishing the internal and external validity of our findings. We also tapped into highly positive as well as highly negative contexts within a conflict, supporting our hypothesis across situations. Furthermore, focusing on both negative and positive emotions allowed us to shed light on a wider phenomenon, rather than one specific to a certain discrete emotion. Finally, we demonstrated this phenomenon in two different populations, thus increasing the external validity of our findings.

Studies 1 to 3 supported our hypothesis through experimental designs assessing the differential influences of empathy and despair on Jewish Israelis of differing ideologies. We found that induced empathy toward both Palestinians (Study 1) and asylum seekers (Study 2) led to increased support for conciliatory and humanitarian policies, respectively, only among leftists, whereas induced despair (Study 3) decreased support for conciliatory policies only among leftists. Studies 4 to 6 took the examination into the field, referencing real-world developments. We found that Jewish–Israeli leftists' policy support was related to their emotions, both empathy and anger, more than rightists' policy support, at times of renewed peace efforts (Study 4) as well as at times of war (Study 5). Finally, we found the same pattern of results for another ideologically relevant emotion, fear, among a different population (Study 6), demonstrating that the proposed interactive effect of ideology and emotion on policy support is limited neither to a certain population nor to emotions potentially associated with leftist ideology.

Theoretical Implications

Together, these studies may contribute to the psychological understanding of ideology. By confirming our hypothesis, the findings reveal that similar emotional processes produce different outcomes for people of differing ideologies. Such an interaction has not been directly examined before, and the present research thus contributes to the theoretical integration of emotions into the study of ideology. The findings also help illuminate how ideology shapes positions, by either highlighting or decreasing the effects of emotional processes on the motivations associated with them. Furthermore, they are in line with previous indications that belief rigidity differs across the ideological spectrum. They may even provide indications as to the processes underlying rigidity: Even when experiencing heightened levels of group-based emotion, ideological rightists adhere to the tenants of their ideology more than leftists, who "correct" their response in accordance with the emotional experience. If rightists are influenced less by intermittent factors such as emotional processes, their political positions should indeed be more stable over time.

Our findings also contribute to the literature on emotions and the understanding of how emotional processes influence positions. Although discrete emotions are seen as influential because of the motivations associated with them, our findings point to the existence of at least one boundary condition for this effect: In the context of intergroup conflict, various emotions lead to changes in policy support mostly among political leftists. There thus exists an ideological threshold to be met for these emotional processes to exert their influence on political outcomes. Just as this boundary condition exists, other variables may create other conditions. Because emotional processes do not occur in a vacuum and their influence is consequently open to moderation by other variables, their effects should not be studied in a vacuum. Manipulations of emotion that are independent of any tangible emotional context may therefore lead to conclusions lacking external validity.

Furthermore, the findings also contribute to research into intergroup conflicts and conflict resolution. Specifically, they provide important clues as to why such conflicts persist and why people are more easily moved toward conflict-supporting positions than away from them—questions that have been central to the study of conflicts in recent years. If, as our findings indicate, the positions of leftists are more reactive to intermittent emotional processes than those of rightists, it follows that leftists are more easily influenced to support conflict than rightists are to support peace.

Applied Implications

Beyond contributions to the literature, the present findings' significance may be in the insights they offer to practitioners attempting to affect positive intersocietal change. Consideration of these findings could improve such practitioners' ability to construct catered interventions, taking into account their target audience's ideological composition, or identifying the ideological subgroup among which affecting change would be most beneficial. Our findings indicate that approaches that positively affect leftists may not work for rightists. Specifically, interventions tackling levels of empathy, despair, anger, fear, and possibly other emotional processes may be less effective among ideological rightists, and, especially in right-leaning societies, practitioners may be misdirecting valuable efforts trying to affect change by focusing on emotional change among the general public.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite our attempts to ensure each study addressed the preceding studies' limitations and offered additional insights, the present research still has several limitations. One central limitation lies in the limited context in which we conducted these studies. All samples were taken from the Israeli public, and five of the six studies focused on emotional processes directed at the relationship with the adversary in an intractable conflict. In Study 2, we took a first step toward examining our hypothesis within intergroup relations exterior to intractable conflict, but even this context bears much in

common with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (i.e., the ingroup, perceived threat, intergroup power relations, etc.). Therefore, additional research is needed, focusing on other populations, conflicts, and contexts.

A second limitation is methodological in nature, as no formal power analyses were conducted prior to the administration of the studies reported above. Nonetheless, we purposefully collected reasonably large samples in all studies, so that each would be adequate for detecting our hypothesized two-way interaction. Furthermore, the proposed interaction's replication across six different studies varying substantially in design features, as well as across populations, suggests that this interactive effect is robust.

An additional limitation stems from our reliance on self-report rather than performance-based measures to gauge changes in policy support. We acknowledge the inherent shortcomings of this approach, as self-report may not always relate directly to actual political behavior. Therefore, future research should investigate the hypothesized effect using behaviorally-assessed political outcomes. Nonetheless, in political contexts, policy support constitutes more than a general attitude, as citizens in democracies may actually affect policies by lending their support to them through polls, referendums, or elections. Thus, the value of self-report measures in this context is higher than in non-political contexts, in which self-reporting may have little effect on outcomes.

Another element we have yet to understand in the present examination is whether or not the differing outcomes found across the ideological spectrum are a unique product of the emotional process, or, conversely, a general difference in the influence of intermittent contextual cues. The theory behind our findings may indicate a broader phenomenon, by which leftists are generally more responsive to stimuli and information in the changing environment, be they emotional or not. On the other hand, it could be that the differences found relate directly to the elements of emotional processing, and such left–right differences would emerge more clearly only in relation to emotional cues. Future research should tackle this question more directly, comparing among different types of cues and stimuli.

Although our findings conform with existing reports on the relative rigidity of ideological rightists' beliefs compared with those of leftists, the possible specificity of these findings constitutes another limitation of the present investigation. It is reasonable to posit that despite our consistent findings, contexts may exist in which rightists are more influenced than leftists by their emotional processes. Conversely, there may be contexts in which leftists' positions are not significantly guided by their emotions. Indeed, rigidity in itself can also be viewed as a motivated attendance to certain stimuli and not others, instead of a general tendency to adhere to a mental set, and such a view would indicate that certain emotions may influence even highly rigid individuals. In this regard, it may be useful to draw on recent developments in the psychological understanding of moral

foundations (see Graham, Haidt, & Nosek, 2009). Just as various different categories have been identified in morality, demonstrating that rightists and leftists rely on different categories rather than differing from one another on morality in general, it would be interesting to examine whether similar theoretical developments could shed a more nuanced light on right–left differences in emotional processes and their outcomes. Future research should attempt to identify such dimensions of emotionality and their relation to ideology.

Finally, an important direction that we believe should be examined in the future relates to a section of the political spectrum unaddressed in the present article—the political center. In many societies, politics are not organized dichotomously, and a center exists under different labels: centrists, moderates, independents, undecided voters, and so on. In the current investigation, we followed the common practice of treating the political spectrum as continuous, with findings for the center, by virtue of the statistical procedure, always lodged between those for the right and left. It may be, however, that belonging to the political center stems from unique psychological needs and motivations, and that these manifest in differing emotional processes or outcomes. Empirical investigations should place a spotlight on this group in the future.

Notes

1. Research has demonstrated individual differences in the affective and cognitive bases of attitudes (Crites, Fabrigar, & Petty, 1994). An alternative explanation for the results we present throughout this article would accordingly be that leftists have stronger affective bases for their attitudes on the dependent variables examined in Studies 1 to 5 than rightists. To rule this out, we ran a study among 110 Jewish Israelis examining left–right differences in affective attitude bases (based on Crites et al., 1994, and See, Petty, & Fabrigar, 2013). We included eight topics and found that in all but two analyses, ideology did not

significantly moderate the affective base–judgment relationship. The two significant and marginally significant analyses indicated opposite trends: While for one (removal of roadblocks—a gesture; $p < .06$), leftists had a stronger affective basis for their judgment, for the other (humanitarian aid to asylum seekers; $p < .05$), rightists had a stronger affective basis. There was thus no consistent support for this alternative explanation. This is despite the fact the pilot's findings conformed to what we know and expect regarding right–left attitudinal differences on these topics.

2. Because there is no official conflict to reconcile between asylum seekers and citizens in Israel, it is irrelevant to speak of conciliatory policies in this context. We adapted the measure to address more relevant outgroup-related policies.

Supplemental Material

The online supplemental material is available at http://pspb.sagepub.com/supplemental.

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