Long-term Change in Conflict Attitudes: A Dynamic Perspective

Alon Yakter
Tel Aviv University
ayakter@tauex.tau.ac.il

Liran Harsgor
University of Haifa
lharsgor@poli.haifa.ac.il

July 2021

Abstract

A large literature examines how public attitudes on conflict resolution react to conflicts' ongoing events. However, the temporal dynamics of these relationships remain understudied. Addressing this question, we suggest that greater violence, a main focal point in the literature, typically affects attitudes immediately but fleetingly, consistent with short-term emotional responses to physical threats. By contrast, non-violent political events signaling the adversary's intentions can have a lagged but longer-lasting attitudinal influence, implying deeper belief-updating processes. We test these hypotheses using a dynamic analysis of two decades of monthly surveys from Israel (2001-2020). We find that the long-term trajectory of aggregate public opinion about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict corresponds not with violence levels but with non-violent events signaling Palestinian preferences, particularly failed negotiations and hawkish leadership selection by the latter. These findings illuminate the temporal dimension of public attitudes in conflictual settings and stress the underdiscussed importance of non-violent signals for their resolution.

We would like to thank Daniel Arnon, Avishay Ben Sasson-Gordis, Carmela Lutmer, Quinn Mecham, Anil Menon, Tolga Sinmazdemir, and Matthew Ward for their helpful comments and suggestions. We are also grateful to Nimrod Rosler for Peace Index data access and Mohammad Saad for valuable research assistance. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association (2020), the Midwest Political Science Association (2021), the European Political Science Association (2021), the International Society for Political Psychology (2021), and the Israeli Association for International Studies (2021, where it received the Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov best paper award).

Introduction

How do public attitudes about conflict resolution react over time to the conflict's events? This question stands at the heart of discussions about public opinion and bottom-up pressures in the face of political violence, terrorism, wars, and diplomacy. The public's reaction to and lingering memory of meaningful incidents play a key role in the long-run trajectory of conflicts and their prospects for a peaceful solution. Accordingly, our understanding of the short- and long-term dynamics of popular attitudes in conflictual settings carries important implications for domestic and international politics alike.

Past research has significantly advanced our understanding of popular reactions to different events in active conflicts, with particular emphasis on the influence of greater violence by an adversary group. Nevertheless, these findings have focused predominantly on immediate or static attitudinal responses, exploring cross-sectional differences between individuals and contexts at frozen moments in time. We know far less, however, about the complex temporal dynamics of these influences. Which conflictual events leave a deeper and longer mark on public opinion over time? Does the impact of different events vary in duration and erosion rate? And what theoretical processes do they imply? These questions are essential to fully understand the influence that large-scale events have on the bottom-up forces driving violent conflicts over time.

In this paper, we suggest that public attitudes in active conflicts vary in their temporal reaction to two types of events. The first type includes violent actions by the adversary, which pose an instant and palpable threat to the in-group. Accordingly, they should exert an instantaneous but short-lived influence on public opinion, reflecting immediate emotional reactions that ease once the danger subsides. The second type comprises non-violent political events, either by elites or by popular actors, that send salient signals about the adversary's intentions and the conflict's future. Such events should have a lagged but longer-lasting attitudinal effect, implying slower but deeper belief updating based on more complex information and additional top-down cues. We, therefore, argue that the latter type of events, which is often overlooked in the literature, has a greater and longer influence on public attitudes in active conflicts than violence levels.

We test these hypotheses on Jewish-Israeli public opinion regarding the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the turn of the century. Using data from the Peace Index, a unique monthly time-series spanning two full decades (2001-2020), we examine how these aggregate

attitudes react to real-world violence and non-violent signals over time. Our argument is supported both by an error-correction model, which estimates recurring average patterns of attitudinal shifts, and by a structural breakpoint analysis, which inductively identifies key moments of long-term change in the data. Like past research, we find that greater Palestinian violence promptly depresses aggregate support and hope for compromise among Jewish Israelis. However, this influence is relatively brief and does not leave a long-lasting mark on public opinion. By contrast, failed negotiation summits and hawkish leadership selection by the Palestinians, both non-violent political events sending negative signals about the latter's intentions, exert a lagged but longer influence on the long-term trajectory of Jewish-Israeli attitudes. Indeed, in the past two decades, the two largest structural changes in Jewish-Israeli support and hope for compromise followed the victory of Islamist movement Hamas in the 2006 Palestinian election and the US administration's failed attempts to restart negotiations in 2009. A close examination of these critical moments provides additional qualitative insight into their dynamics and the role of top-down cues.

The paper makes several contributions to the larger debate about the dynamics of public opinion in conflictual and violent settings. In particular, our findings highlight the underexplored but critical role of non-violent signals about the out-group in the long-term development of public attitudes. While we confirm past findings on the immediate effect of violence, we show that these claims remain incomplete without a broader consideration of slower but deeper influences involving non-violent signals. This conclusion offers important lessons about the types of factors and strategies that can advance or impede resolution in prolonged conflicts, particularly intended and unintended informational cues from international and local actors about the conflict's future and each side's goals. It further informs a broader range of questions about the dynamic nature of public attitudes following large-scale events such as natural disasters, economic crises, immigration waves, and other global and domestic political shocks.

In doing so, the paper underscores the value of fine-grained time-series data and models that probe changes in popular attitudes over time, especially in dynamic contexts with multiple types of influential events. Our results urge researchers to take a longer and more dynamic view that can better distinguish short- and long-term processes of attitudinal change, outline the different types of real-world events that drive them, and formulate new research questions about their micro-behavioral foundations and comparative differences across regions, periods, and contexts.

The paper proceeds as follows. We begin with a brief review of existing explanations for changes in public attitudes in conflictual settings and discuss their underexplored temporal dimension. We then suggest two dynamic logics that contrast immediate emotional reactions and slower belief-updating processes. After presenting the Israeli case study and data, the remainder of the paper tests our expectations empirically and discusses the broader implications and limits of our findings.

Violence, Information, and the Missing Dynamic Perspective

An extensive body of work has studied the types of real-world events that influence public attitudes in conflictual contexts. Of these factors, violence has received the greatest scholarly attention. According to multiple studies from recent years, increased violence by an adversary group triggers negative emotions such as anger, threat, and stress (Canetti-Nisim et al. 2009; Halperin 2011; Huddy et al. 2005; Malhotra and Popp 2012; Maoz and McCauley 2005; Vasilopoulos et al. 2019) and increases ethnocentric and intolerant sentiments (Echebarria-Echabe and Fernández-Guede 2006; Kam and Kinder 2007; Peffley, Hutchison, and Shamir 2015). These reactions tend to amplify militant attitudes that support aggressive security policies (Brouard, Vasilopoulos, and Foucault 2018; Kupatadze and Zeitzoff 2021), favor hawkish and oppositionist politicians (Aytaç and Çarkoğlu 2021; Bali 2007; Berrebi and Klor 2006, 2008; Bonanno and Jost 2006; Getmansky and Zeitzoff 2014; Jaeger et al. 2012; Kibris 2011), and deepen reluctance to compromise with the out-group (Bayer, Klasen, and Adam 2007; Canetti et al. 2017, 2018; Hirsch-Hoefler et al. 2014).

In some cases, nevertheless, violence can have the opposite effect and increase popular support for peaceful agreements and moderate politicians (Arian, Shamir, and Ventura 1992; Gould and Klor 2010; Tellez 2019). Contrary to hawkish reactions, such conciliatory attitudes are more likely to grow when violent events activate feelings of anxiety and weariness, raise concerns about severe violence in the future, and foster a greater desire to end the bloodshed (Beber, Roessler, and Scacco 2014; Hazlett 2019; Huddy et al. 2005; Leshem and Halperin 2021).

While the influence of violence has been researched extensively, several behavioral studies also find that non-violent information about the adversary's goals and the conflict's future can change people's openness for new facts, perceptions of the out-group, and support for compromise (Cohen-Chen et al. 2014; Hall et al. 2018; Halperin et al. 2011; Leshem and Halperin 2020; Rosler, Cohen-Chen, and Halperin 2017). New information about the adversary and the conflict,

nevertheless, is accepted more easily when it reaffirms existing preconceptions, typically negative ones, rather than challenges them (Bar-Tal et al. 2009; Halperin and Bar-Tal 2011; Nyhan and Zeitzoff 2018; Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirsman 2010). Moreover, information about the out-group's intentions can alter people's practical hopes about the prospects of peace regardless of their support for compromise in principle (Leshem 2019; Leshem and Halperin 2020).

Most of the literature, however, shares similar vagueness about the dynamic aspect of its findings. Many studies—particularly tests for causal mechanisms in controlled or quasi-controlled environments—focus on attitudinal change in the immediate aftermath of specific events or stimuli. Others analyze correlations with attitudes at a later but frozen point in time, be it days, weeks, months, or several years after the event took place. The selection of the lag between cause and effect in such works often reflects the data collection's circumstances rather than a theoretical or empirical justification. Finally, even when the data include multiple periods, most time series tend to be short, have relatively large gaps, and lack in-depth analyses of long-term temporal structures.[1] This ambiguity leaves several important questions understudied: how long does the influence of different event types endure in the public's mind? At what rate do their effects erode? And to what extent do they alter the long-term trajectory of public opinion regarding the conflict?

Immediate Threats and Long-Term Belief Updating

When considering these questions, we distinguish between the expected temporal influences of two types of events, which vary by the level of physical threat that they pose and by the clarity of their meaning. The first type of events includes mostly violent actions against a certain group. Such incidents pose an immediate and palpable threat to one's personal and collective safety. They also convey a clear and self-evident meaning: a wish to harm the in-group. As past research finds, such direct and tangible threats are likely to instantly trigger potent negative emotions and attitudes (Huddy et al. 2002; Landau et al. 2004; Wohl, Branscombe, and Reysen 2010). Since these instinctive reactions are linked to a concrete threat, we expect that they would wax and wane with its presence, i.e., they should be strongest closest to the violent event and ease as the physical peril subsides. As noted earlier, the literature has mixed expectations about the direction of this

[1] For example, some studies (e.g., Berrebi and Klor 2008; Peffley, Hutchison, and Shamir 2015) use time-series data to determine the statistically optimal time lag between violent events and subsequent public reactions, but they then employ this lag as a static covariate rather than explore broader dynamic effects. For exceptions, see Fielding and Penny (2009) and Jaeger et al. (2012), albeit with notably shorter and sparser time series than analyzed in this paper.

influence: most studies hypothesize that violence should deepen negative attitudes about compromise, while several others anticipate a possible positive change. Thus, we can establish two competing hypotheses about the temporal influence of violence levels on public attitudes regarding the conflict:

> ***H1.a.*** *Greater violence will* dampen *public support and hope for conflict resolution immediately but only for a short period.*
>
> ***H1.b.*** *Greater violence will* enhance *public support and hope for conflict resolution immediately but only for a short period.*

By contrast, the second type of events offers new information about the adversary's goals and the conflict's future without posing an immediate physical threat. While these non-violent events can take various idiosyncratic forms, such signals are particularly visible when they publicly indicate the other side's collective preferences on the conflict. This can occur, for example, when the two groups negotiate and visibly reveal their demands and the extent to which they are willing to compromise. Similar signals are also sent when the out-group publicly selects its leaders and the visions that they offer regarding the conflict.

By the same logic noted earlier, the lack of a tangible threat lowers the odds of activating immediate emotional reactions. Moreover, it also carries greater uncertainty regarding the signal's meaning. Indeed, new and complex information often requires subsequent elite cues and public narratives for proper cognitive and emotional processing (Bar-Tal and Halperin 2011; Berinsky 2009; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Zaller 1992). These slower mechanisms, accordingly, resemble rational belief updating rather than fleeting visceral responses (Gordon and Arian 2001). Therefore, we expect that salient non-violent signals about the adversary would take longer to factor into popular attitudes, but, once they do, can become entrenched in public beliefs for lengthier periods after the initial event. We can therefore formulate the following hypothesis:

> ***H2.*** *Salient negative (positive) new information about the adversary's preferences will dampen (enhance) public support and hope for conflict resolution more slowly but for longer periods than violence.*

Two caveats are in order. First, in extreme cases, violent events can create lasting traumas that sustain long after the danger passes. This typically occurs to individuals who were directly exposed to or harmed by the violence and show signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (Bonanno

and Jost 2006; Hirsch-Hoefler et al. 2014). Such phenomena usually occur in small numbers that do not shift aggregate public opinion. However, cases with outstanding large-scale atrocities, such as indiscriminate mass violence or forced population transfers, can form broad victimhood narratives passed down through generations (Balcells 2012; Lupu and Peisakhin 2017; Rozenas, Schutte, and Zhukov 2017). Our theoretical hypotheses disregard such extreme cases given their rarity, but students of conflicts with violence of this scale may need to adjust their expectations accordingly.

Second, some violent events can also carry long-term signals about the adversary's intentions. We expect this result to be more likely in nascent or dormant conflicts, where the level of uncertainty about the other side's identity, goals, and behavior is particularly high. In such contexts, a violent action may deliver meaningful long-term information about the out-group that extends beyond an immediate physical threat. Nevertheless, we do not expect such long-term implications in active conflicts, where the adversary and core divisions are salient and known.

In what follows, we test our hypotheses empirically using a dynamic analysis of hundreds of monthly public opinion surveys conducted in Israel over two decades. The data's high frequency and longevity allow us to analyze how aggregate attitudes on the conflict react to various violence levels and informational events, how quickly they shift, and how long the reaction endures. Before we elaborate on our methodological approach, however, we first discuss our case study and data.

The Israeli Case

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has long been a central case study in the research of conflicts and political behavior. The conflict has been a defining and salient issue in Israeli society, politics, and voter behavior (Arian and Shamir 2008; Shamir and Arian 1999). Nevertheless, despite its enduring presence, the conflict's progression has been quite dynamic. In the past few decades, the Israeli public faced differing degrees of violence, including two large-scale violent campaigns (*Intifadas*) in the 1980s and early 2000s, ebbs and flows of small-scale terrorist attacks and rocket shelling, and prolonged quiet periods.[2] The nature of violence itself varies as well, shifting periodically between Molotov cocktail and stone throwing, lone-wolf knife or gun attacks, large-scale suicide and car bombings, and rocket attacks. The conflict has also provided multiple

[2] The conflict infamously inflicts violence on both sides, particularly asymmetrically against the Palestinians. Due to the scope of our data, we only discuss the one-sided experience of Israelis.

opportunities to assess the other side's intentions. The past decades included several rounds of negotiations for a peace agreement, some prolonged with meaningful advancements, particularly in the 1990s and briefly in the mid-2000s, and others shorter and futile with a mutual blame game. Both parties also underwent political and leadership changes over the years, signaling interchanging popular support for combative or moderate visions of the conflict.

These temporal variations in violence and non-violent events deem Israel a particularly fitting case to examine their dynamic influences on attitudes over time. They also mark the boundaries of our analysis, a point that we discuss further in the paper's conclusion. In particular, the conflict's rich temporal dynamics are testable due to its protracted nature. As such, our broader inferences should be considered carefully, particularly where hostilities are experienced as a single large-scale shock with long-term traumatic effects (e.g., significant attacks or mass atrocities) and the adversary is unfamiliar. Nevertheless, as Peffley, Hutchison, and Shamir (2015, 819) observe, Israel's experience with violence is "distinctive but not unique" and is comparable with dozens of other countries, including multiple democracies. Indeed, as more countries endure recurrent conflict and violent acts, so does the Israeli experience become more relevant and generalizable.

Public Attitudes about the Conflict: The Peace Index Data

Our primary outcome of interest is Israeli public attitudes on the conflict's resolution. To examine these attitudes over time, we pooled hundreds of public opinion surveys from the Peace Index, a survey project established in the 1990s at Tel Aviv University. Since its establishment, the Peace Index has regularly conducted monthly representative surveys with a small set of recurring questions about the peace process alongside interchanging questions on each month's current events. These data, therefore, offer a unique opportunity to examine national attitudes on the conflict using identical questions in close and regular intervals over two full decades.

We examine two dependent variables based on a pair of questions that have been asked regularly starting July 2001. The first dependent variable gauges *ideological support for negotiations in principle* based on the following question: "What is your position on conducting peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority?" The second dependent variable measures the level of *pragmatic hope that a peace agreement will be achieved in practice* with the following question: "Do you believe or not believe that negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority will lead in the coming years to peace between Israel and the Palestinians?"

Both questions are answered using a four-point scale ranging from "Strongly in favor/believe" to "strongly opposed"/"do not believe at all". We consider both dimensions separately since they have been shown to vary at times despite a strong correlation (Hermann and Yaar 2019; Leshem and Halperin 2020).

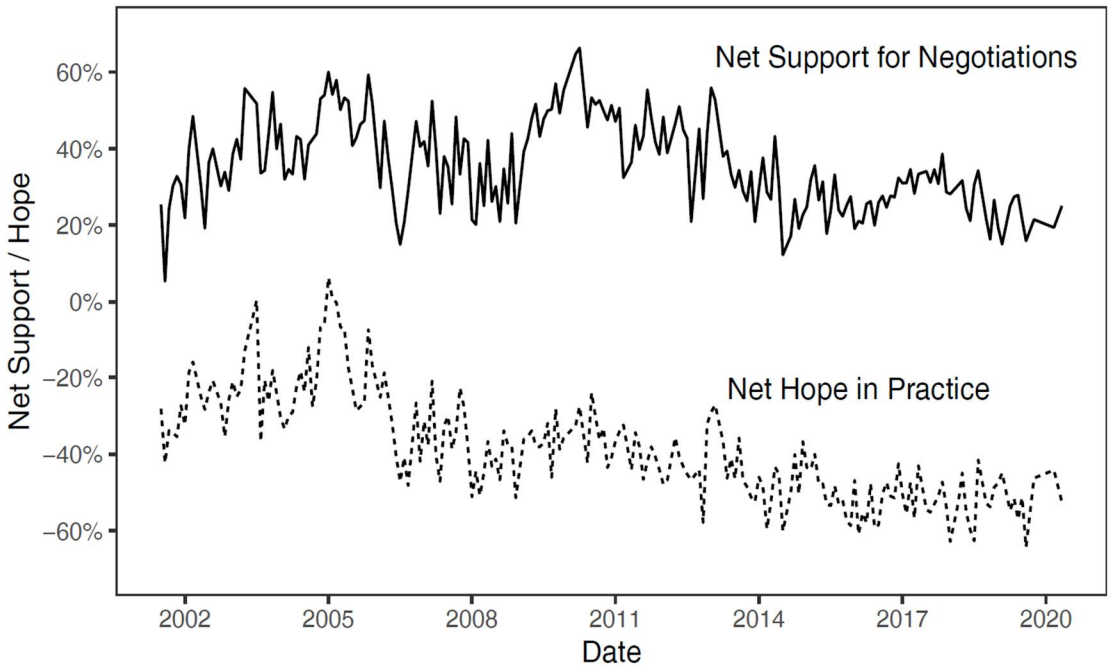
While each monthly survey uses a new sample of respondents, their representative design produces a reliable time series of aggregate public attitudes. Therefore, our two dependent variables measure the monthly aggregate net support for each statement, i.e., the total share of negative answers to each question subtracted from the share of positive answers every month. Since Arab citizens have been included inconsistently throughout the series, we aggregate only answers from Israel's dominant Jewish majority. Moreover, we expect Arab citizens, many of whom identify as Israeli-Palestinians, to display different attitudinal patterns toward the conflict's events compared to the Jewish majority. Indeed, the attitudes of ethnic minorities in ethnonational conflicts merit a separate theoretical and empirical framework that is beyond the scope of this paper. All in all, both variables comprise 227 months from July 2001 to May 2020.

Of these months, twenty-five have missing observations.[3] Section 2 in the Supplementary Index (SI) shows that the missing observations are spaced far apart, predominantly in single gaps, and uncorrelated with the conflict's violence levels and non-violent events. Hence, together with a strong serial autocorrelation in both series, we feel safe to impute the missing observations with a simple linear interpolation. Since the missing values are only in the dependent variables, multiple imputation is an inappropriate alternative (von Hippel 2007; Little 1992). For additional robustness, we reestimated our error-correction model using several other interpolation methods and after omitting the largest missing gap. The results, also discussed in the SI, remain substantively unchanged.

Figure 1 plots both time series. The data show that aggregate net support for negotiations in principle has remained positive throughout the past twenty years notwithstanding occasional ebbs and flows. The aggregate net hope for peace in practice is notably lower and has been consistently negative and in decline despite some correlated movements with the former. Our analysis attempts to shed new light on the dynamic nature of these trends with two complementary methods. First, we estimate a general error-correction model with prespecified independent variables to find average patterns across the entire sample period. Second, we employ a structural

[3] Sixteen months had no surveys at all and nine more surveys skipped the two relevant questions.

***Figure 1**. Net Support for Negotiations and Net Hope about Peace in Practice, July 2001-May 2020.*



breakpoint analysis to inductively identify critical junctures of long-term attitudinal change and then qualitatively probe for related real-world events and implied mechanisms. Together, the two methods establish a robust dual test for our hypotheses. We discuss each set of findings in turn.

Average Patterns of Attitudinal Change: A General Error-Correction Model

Independent Variables

We begin with a general error-correction model that estimates attitudinal changes using several independent variables indicating monthly violence levels and non-violent signals. We use two independent variables to gauge the monthly levels of violence experienced by Israelis as part of the conflict. The first counts the *monthly number of Israeli casualties* due to Palestinian actions.[4] Given the country's mandatory military service and high sensitivity for combat deaths (Levy 2012), we count both civilian and security forces fatalities. The second variable measures the *monthly number of rockets* shot at Israel from the Gaza strip.[5] The Palestinian use of rockets started in the early-2000s and quickly increased in volume and range, now reaching the most populous areas in

[4] The data are collected by B'Tselem (https://www.btselem.org/statistics).
[5] We code rocket data based on monthly reports issued by the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/)

central Israel. Whereas these rockets are less deadly than other forms of violence, they are aimed indiscriminately at civilians and have meaningful psychological, social, and political effects (Besser and Neria 2009; Getmansky and Zeitzoff 2014; Greene et al. 2018; Zeitzoff 2014). Because casualties and rockets have unevenly high peaks and a likely decreasing marginal influence, we calculate the natural logarithm of both.[6]

Next, we construct two variables to measure non-violent events with public signals about the adversary's intentions.[7] Coding such events *a priori* is not a trivial task. Since they can take multiple idiosyncratic forms, an open coding scheme may be biased in favor of high-impact events while overlooking similar ones that left weak public marks. Hence, we focus more conservatively on two types of events that can be coded systematically. The first variable is a dummy indicating months with *public Israeli-Palestinian negotiation meetings*. Negotiation summits and their conclusion send visible and salient signals about the out-group's demands, willingness to compromise, and distance from the in-group's positions. Accordingly, we only include summits that were publically known in real time. Our data include five public negotiation meetings between 2001 and 2020, reflecting the conflict's diplomatic gridlock since the turn of the century. In principle, such meetings can send either a negative and a positive signal, depending on their conclusions. However, because of their rarity and futility throughout our sample period, we code all these meetings as similarly negative signals.

The second variable gauges *hawkish leadership selection in the Palestinian Authority* using a categorical score that indicates months with leadership changes signaling a militant (1) or moderate (-1) disposition. The popular choice of hawkish or moderate leaders sends a visible signal about greater public support on the other side for their visions on the conflict. Our sample period includes four such moments, one positive and three negative. In January 2005, a positive signal was sent when the relatively moderate Mahmoud Abbas was elected president following Yassir Arafat's death.[8] The three negative events signaled popular support for Hamas, a militant Islamist

[6] To deal with zeros, we take the natural log of each month's counts plus one. Since high peaks in casualties and rockets typically indicate mutual violence and direct combat, e.g., military operations in Gaza, we do not model such operations separately to avoid multicollinearity.

[7] Some may suggest the media as an influential source for such signals. Yet, for our purposes, the media operates as a mediating channel that frames external events rather than as an initiator. Moreover, past research has shown that media coverage in Israel displays a stable tendency for negative framing of the conflict's events (Sheafer and Dvir-Gvirsman 2010; Wolfsfeld 2004). Hence, we leave questions about media framing effects outside the scope of our analysis and treat it as a constant, integral aspect of all the events that we model.

[8] Arafat was perceived by most Jewish Israelis as a violent extremist. In the October 2004 Peace Index survey, weeks before his death, 74.9% of Jewish respondents estimated that Arafat controlled street-level Palestinian violence and

movement that denies Israel's right to exist and has continuously engaged in violence: in March 2006, the movement formed the Palestinian government for the first time after winning a majority of seats in the legislative election; in March 2007, it headed a unity government with the more moderate Fatah party; and in July 2007, after the unity agreement collapsed, it forcibly took control over the Gaza strip and formed a parallel government to Fatah's West Bank administration.

We also include three control variables. First, we calculate *the share of Israeli cabinet ministers from right-wing parties* to control for similar dampening signals about the preferences of fellow Israelis.[9] Second, we use the *real average monthly wage of Israeli hired workers* at constant 2011 prices to control for the state of the economy, which may influence the public mood regardless of the conflict.[10] Third, we include a *monthly time trend* (i.e., a month counter) to account for a possible monotonic long-term decline in support or hope for peace irrespective of specific events. The descriptive plots of all variables are shown in Section 1 of the SI.

Model Setup

To examine the dynamic relationship between the two attitudinal variables and the independent variables, we estimate a general error-correction model (GECM) using an OLS regression (De Boef and Keele 2008; Davidson et al. 1978). The GECM regresses changes in the dependent variable on its own lagged value and on both the first differences and the lagged values of the independent variables. Formally, the GECM is specified as follows:

$$\Delta y_t = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 y_{t-1} + \boldsymbol{\beta}_0^{'} \Delta \boldsymbol{X_t} + \boldsymbol{\beta}_1^{'} \boldsymbol{X_{t-1}} + \epsilon_t$$

where Δy_t is the change in the dependent variable, α_1 estimates the influence of its lagged levels one period earlier (also known as the error-correction term), $\boldsymbol{\beta}_0^{'}$ estimate the immediate effects of a one-unit change in a vector of independent variables $\boldsymbol{X_t}$, and $\boldsymbol{\beta}_1^{'}$ estimate the lagged effect of the same vector of variables one period later. The inclusion of both first differences and lagged values

78.7% regarded him as a terrorist rather than a legitimate statesman. By contrast, in January 2005, after Abbas was elected, 57.3% of Jewish respondents agreed that he is making sincere efforts to stop Palestinian violence and only 31.7% disagreed.

[9] Our argument implies that in-group elite cues are a possible mechanism for belief updating following salient non-violent events. To make sure that changes in the Israeli cabinet's partisanship do not mediate the influence of such events, we reran our models without this control variable. The results remain substantively unchanged.

[10] Other monthly economic indices, such as consumer satisfaction surveys, the monthly unemployment rate, or the Bank of Israel's Composite State-of-the-Economy Index are either unavailable for the sample's entire duration or exhibit a unit root with a high level of integration that could bias our analysis. The average wage, which avoids these problems, has strong bivariate correlations (0.7 to 0.85) with these three alternative indices.

separates the immediate and later effects of each independent variable on the outcome. Moreover, the model's error-correction term (α_1) reflects the monthly rate at which the outcome adjusts back to its former equilibrium after a change in the explanatory variables. In other words, it tells us how quickly the latter's influence erodes as attitudes settle back to their regular baseline levels.

To avoid bias, the GECM requires that all variables have the same order of integration (Grant and Lebo 2016; Keele, Linn, and Webb 2016). A series of unit root tests, specified in Section 3 in the SI, indicate that all our variables but one are stationary. The exception is the share of Israeli right-wing cabinet seats, which is integrated of order one due to long static periods between changes. We, therefore, include only its first difference, i.e., the influence of changes in the cabinet's makeup rather than absolute monthly levels.

To select the proper number of lags in the GECM, we used a general-to-specific approach by iterating our models with different combinations of lag lengths. We then chose the number of lags that optimized model fit based on their Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) and coefficient t-tests scores. The procedure, detailed in Section 4 in the SI, favored a single monthly lag for logged rockets, logged casualties, and average wage, and two monthly lags for negotiation meetings and hawkish Palestinian leadership changes, foreshadowing a temporally intricate effect, as we shall see.[11]

Finally, we tested for serial autocorrelation in our models using both Ljung-Box and Breusch-Godfrey tests. For both dependent variables, we find that adding the first difference of the lagged dependent variable (Δy_{t-1}) is necessary to eliminate autocorrelation and reach dynamic completeness. Additionally, Ljung-Box tests with 6, 12, and 24 monthly lags reject possible concerns of seasonality in our models. These tests are specified in Section 5 of the SI.

GECM Findings

Table 1 presents the GECM estimations.[12] For ease of interpretation, both net attitudes are measured on a scale of 1-100 points rather than percentages. The first-difference coefficients indicate that greater violence—increases in the logged number of rockets or of Israeli casualties—lead to an instant and statistically significant decline in both net support and net hope for peace.

[11] Algebraically, once both the first and second lag of an independent variable are included in a GECM, its first difference (ΔX_t) is replaced with its second difference ($\Delta^2 X_t$).
[12] Cumulative sum (CUSUM) tests for both models verify their parameter stability throughout the series.

Table 1. *Aggregate Attitudinal Changes: General Error-Correction Models*

	(1) Δ Net Support for Negotiations in Principle		(2) Δ Net Hope for Peace in Practice	
	β	S.E.	β	S.E.
Net Support $_{t-1}$	-0.351***	(0.056)		
Δ Net Support $_{t-1}$	-0.143*	(0.061)		
Net Hope $_{t-1}$			-0.323***	(0.063)
Δ Net Hope $_{t-1}$			-0.148*	(0.065)
Δ Log Rockets	-0.890**	(0.316)	-0.654*	(0.302)
Log Rockets $_{t-1}$	-0.221	(0.333)	-0.185	(0.318)
Δ Log Casualties	-1.716**	(0.621)	-1.536*	(0.592)
Log Casualties $_{t-1}$	-2.184**	(0.713)	-0.935	(0.643)
Δ^2 Negotiations $_{t-1}$	-0.297	(3.341)	-0.344	(3.264)
Negotiations $_{t-1}$	-3.504	(7.658)	-0.819	(7.555)
Negotiations $_{t-2}$	-7.637†	(4.588)	-10.450*	(4.385)
Δ^2 Hawkish Leadership $_{t-1}$	4.169	(3.673)	1.625	(3.466)
Hawkish Leadership $_{t-1}$	4.589	(8.314)	-1.288	(7.900)
Hawkish Leadership $_{t-2}$	-17.346***	(5.097)	-10.286*	(4.843)
Δ Right Israeli Cabinet	0.077	(0.075)	0.060	(0.072)
Δ Average Wage	-0.002	(0.001)	0.001	(0.001)
Average Wages $_{t-1}$	-0.003†	(0.001)	-0.001	(0.001)
Trend	-0.043**	(0.016)	-0.073***	(0.019)
Constant	59.668***	(11.392)	26.473**	(8.526)
Long-Run Multipliers (LRM)				
Log Rockets	-0.629	(0.949)	-0.572	(0.98)
Log Casualties	-6.226†	(1.944)	-2.898§	(2.009)
Negotiations	-31.756§	(18.759)	-34.912§	(22.047)
Extreme Lead	-36.361§	(19.078)	-35.855§	(19.913)
N	225		225	
R^2	0.376		0.362	
Ljung-Box Q Test	1.113 (p = 0.292)		2.521 (p = 0.112)	

Note: The dependent variables are on a scale of 1-100. Standard errors in parentheses, † p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001. § Indeterminant statistical significance (middle category) of long-term relationship at the 95% level using the bounds test from Webb, Linn, and Lebo (2020) assuming 5 variables and 150 observations. The LRM standard errors are calculated with the delta method.

All else equal, an increase of one standard deviation in the logged number of rockets is estimated to immediately lower the aggregate net support for negotiations by 1.57 points and net hope for

their prospects by 1.15 points. Similarly, a one-standard-deviation increase in the logged number of casualties is estimated to instantly decrease net support for negotiations by an average of 1.92 points and net hope for peace by 1.72 points. These results, therefore, corroborate the expectation that violence immediately dampens aggregate public attitudes regarding resolution (H1.a). Conversely, we do not see instant attitudinal shifts after negotiation meetings or hawkish leadership changes on the other side, consistent with the expectation of a lagged effect (H2).

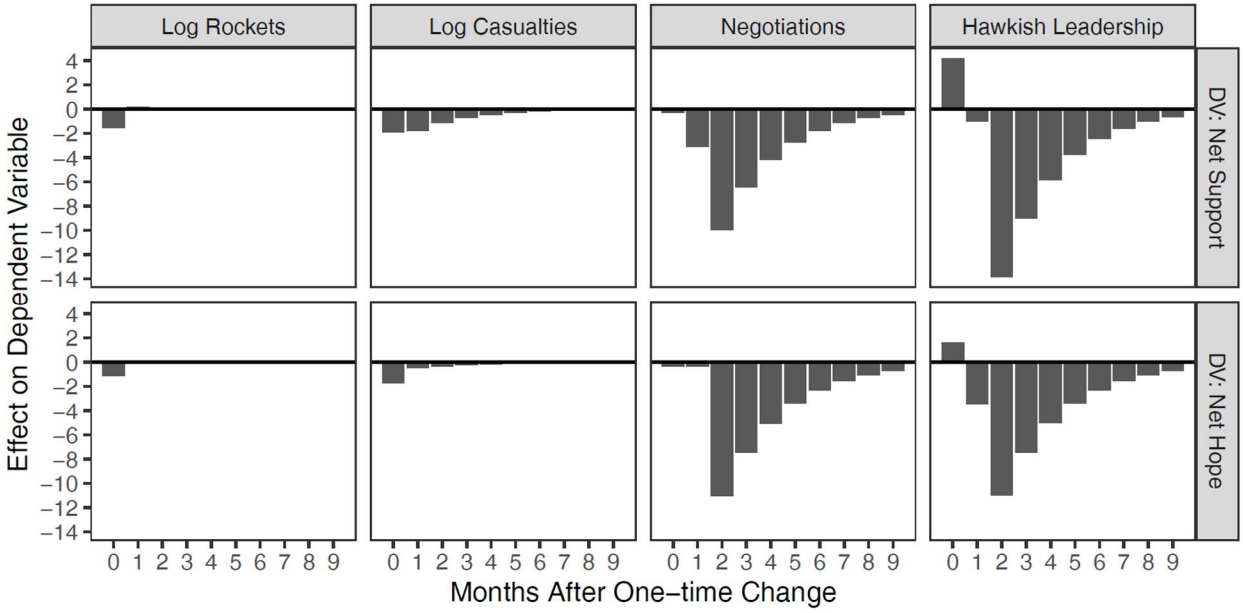
Nevertheless, we are interested in placing these influences in a broader dynamic context. We do so in two ways. First, we estimate each explanatory variable's long-run multiplier (LRM), presented in the bottom part of Table 1. Calculated as $LRM_x = -\frac{\beta_1}{\alpha_1}$, these scores reflect the total cumulative effect of each independent variable across all future periods before it dies down. We estimate the LRMs' confidence levels using the bounds test proposed by Webb, Linn, and Lebo (2020). Recognizing the imperfections of current unit-root tests, these authors propose significance bounds for LRMs regardless of the variables' order of integration. The test has three possible outcomes: no long-term relationship when the t-statistic falls under the lower bound, a statistically significant long-term relationship when it is above the upper bound, and a statistically indeterminate long-term relationship when it is in between. Most LRMs in our model fall in the middle category, indicating ambiguous statistical confidence. The long-run effect of rockets, however, is strictly insignificant.

Second, we compute the temporal distribution of this long-term effect over time. This calculation is based on each variable's immediate effect at time *t* (β_0), additional effect at *t+1* (β_1) and *t+2* where relevant, and the effect's relative monthly erosion rate as estimated by the error-correction term (α_1). Figure 2 plots the monthly distribution of each variable's long-term influence after a one-off increase by one standard deviation. For negotiations and hawkish leadership change, where the outcomes are binary or categorical, we assume a switch from 0 to 1.

The resulting patterns tell a temporally intricate story. In both models, the negative influence of rocket shelling erodes immediately and disappears by the following month.[13] The

[13] Getmansky and Zeitzoff (2014) argue that the mere growing threat of Palestinian rockets, whose range has expanded over the sample period, pushed the Israeli electorate rightward at the ballot boxes. Unfortunately, we do not have data on the exact location of each rocket hit. Instead, we perform two tests to rule out a similar influence on our dependent variables. First, we reestimated our models while interacting the logged rocket counts—only its first difference, only its first lag, and then both simultaneously—with a dummy indicating the period after a rocket was first shot at the Tel Aviv metropolitan area (November 2012). Second, to gauge a more gradual and steady growth in threat over time, we also interacted the logged rockets variables with a simple yearly count. All interaction terms produced null results.

***Figure 2**. Estimated Average Lag Distribution after a One-Standard-Deviation Increase in Each Independent Variable (Dummy and Categorical Variables Increase from 0 to 1).*



dynamic effect of casualties follows a similar pattern, albeit depending on the type of attitude. Like rocket shelling, a one-standard-deviation increase in the logged number of casualties has a sudden but fleeting influence on the aggregate hope for peace, eroding after a single month. At the same time, the aggregate willingness to negotiate with the Palestinians is slightly less forgiving: a one-standard-deviation shock in logged casualties creates an immediate negative decline of 1.92 points but its cumulative effect reaches 6.23 points on average over the next four to five months.[14] More casualties, therefore, do not lead to greater pessimism about the prospects of peace beyond a single month (like rocket shelling) but they do have a slightly larger and longer dampening influence on the willingness to negotiate with the Palestinians. The broader implication, nevertheless, supports Hypothesis H1.a: greater violence levels undermine support and hope for compromise immediately, but their influence erodes relatively quickly.

By contrast, we see the opposite dynamic with non-violent signals. Neither negotiation meetings nor hawkish leadership changes trigger a notable sudden reaction in public opinion, but both have a longer-term demoralizing influence that peaks two months after the events and erodes slowly thereafter. On average, negotiation meetings barely change aggregate support and hope for

[14] Naturally, these estimations depend on the assumed shock size. Nevertheless, while more extreme changes in the number of casualties increase the cumulative effect size, their erosion pattern remains similar.

an agreement immediately after they occur or in the following month. However, as the failure becomes evident and is properly processed, both aggregate support and hope for peace plummet around two months after the summit, an influence that sometimes lasts even nine months later.

Hawkish signals about the Palestinians' leadership selection exhibit a similar pattern. Curiously, we find a positive immediate effect, possibly reflecting an initial hope for pragmatic moderation once extremist factions face the pressures of leadership. Nevertheless, it is statistically insignificant from zero and turns negative one month later. While the bounds tests remain statistically indeterminate about the full extent of these long-run influences, the GECM indicates that the largest dip, which takes place at *t+2*, is statistically significant for both negotiations and leadership change. These results, therefore, support Hypothesis H2, indicating that these informational signals have a lagged but prolonged influence on aggregate public attitudes about the conflict's resolution.

Which Events Are the Most Influential? An Inductive Structural Breakpoint Analysis

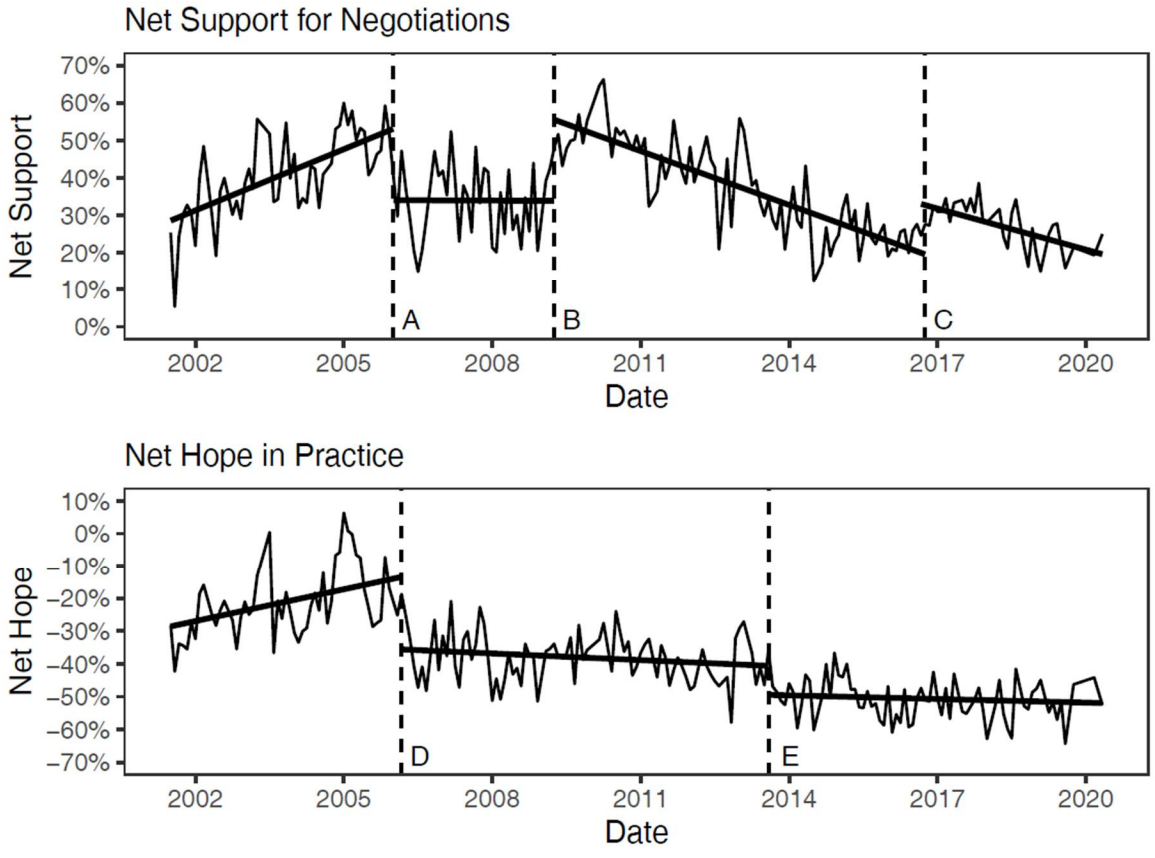
The GECM estimation is instructive but has several limitations. First, as noted earlier, it models average attitudinal changes following events that can be coded systematically, yet such incidents can take idiosyncratic forms that are hard to operationalize *ex ante*. This is particularly true for singular moments such as deeply traumatic violent acts or unique non-violent events that reshape earlier conceptions. Second, the statistical indetermination of the LRM bounds tests muddies our full confidence in the long-term influence of non-violent signals. Finally, the average patterns provide little information about the political dynamics accompanying critical moments of long-term attitudinal change.

To address these issues, we complement our earlier findings with an inductive analysis of structural breakpoints in our two attitudinal series. Rather than prespecified independent variables, structural breakpoint analyses detect moments of significant change in the underlying structure of the outcome data. Once such points are statistically identified, we can qualitatively examine real-world events that took place around these times and assess their fit with different theoretical explanations (Caporale and Grier 2005; Wawro and Katznelson 2014). In our case, we expect that long-term breaks in the two aggregate attitudes will align with salient non-violent events signaling the Palestinians' intentions and the conflict's future rather than with notable violence.

We estimate structural breakpoints in our data using Bai and Perron's method (1998, 2003), which allows for multiple breaks in each series. A Zivot-Andrews unit-root test confirms the required assumption that both attitudinal series are breakpoint stationary. We use a standard trimming parameter value of 0.15 and determine the number and position of the estimated breakpoints with a sequential *l+1* breaks versus *l* test.[15] Since both series show signs of trend stationarity, we include a temporal trend term in the estimation.

Figure 3 plots the estimated breakpoints in aggregate net support and hope for compromise. In each series, the dashed vertical lines mark identified breakpoints while the fitted lines display the average trend in each subperiod. The aggregate net support for negotiations in principle, presented in the top panel, has three estimated breakpoints: January 2006 (A), April

Figure 3*. Structural Breakpoints (Vertical Dashed Lines) in Aggregate Net Support for Negotiations (Top Panel) and Net Hope for Peace in Practice (Bottom Panel) Using Bai-Perron Models*



[15] As a robustness check, the same breakpoints are also identified with Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) and Liu-Wu-Zidek (LWZ) tests.

Table 2. *Structural Breakpoint Characteristics*

	Direction of Change		*Violence Levels*	*Non-Violent Events*
	In Levels	*In Trend*		
Net Support				
A. Jan. 2006	-	-	Low	Hamas wins election
B. Apr. 2009	+	-	Low	Diplomatic momentum and failure
C. Oct. 2016	+	No Change	Low	Trump wins election
Net Hope				
D. Apr. 2006	-	-	Average	Hamas forms government
E. Sep. 2013	-	No Change	Low	Diplomatic failure

Note: The direction of change in levels and trends is supported by a series of interrupted time-series models (see SI Section 6.1). Violence levels are considered vis-à-vis the sample and annual averages (see SI Section 6.2).

2009 (B), and October 2016 (C). The aggregate net hope for peace in practice, plotted in the bottom panel, has two estimated breakpoints: April 2006 (D) and September 2013 (E).

The key characteristics of these breakpoints are summarized in Table 2. The first two columns indicate whether each structural breakpoint includes changes in absolute levels and/or long-term trend and their direction.[16] These shifts show both the similarities and differences between the two attitudes. Both ideological support for negotiations and hope about their prospects grew similarly during the early 2000s and experienced a parallel sharp drop in early 2006 (points A and D). In both cases, this break shifted the long-term trajectory downward for the next few years. At this point, however, the two series diverge. The aggregate net support for negotiations temporarily bounced back in early 2009 (point B) before gradually eroding again. Practical hope for peace, by contrast, never meaningfully rebounded after 2006. The last breakpoints in both series—September 2013 (point E) and October 2016 (point C)—are smaller and exhibit relatively minor changes in levels without shifting the long-term trend.

Which factors explain these breaks? The third column in Table 2 notes the relative level of violence at each point as reflected in rocket and casualty levels compared to their sample averages.[17] Supporting our earlier findings, none of the long-term breaks occurred in particularly violent moments nor did they take place during notable military operations. By contrast, as the fourth column indicates, all moments can be linked with non-violent events that sent salient signals

[16] The direction and significance of each change are corroborated econometrically by a series of interrupted time-series models, detailed in Section 6.1 in the SI.

[17] See SI Section 6.2 for a detailed comparison of the number of rockets and casualties at each breakpoint and their sample, decade, and annual averages.

about the other side's preferences and the prospects of a resolution. Moreover, as we expect, most involve failed negotiations or leadership selection. To gain better insight into the influence of these events, we turn to examine each moment in greater detail. We pay particular attention to the first three breakpoints, which exhibit the largest structural changes in both attitudinal levels and trends.

January-April 2006: Hamas's Electoral Victory

The first notable breakpoint in both net support and net hope occurred in January-April 2006 (points A and D). The early months of 2006 featured two political developments: the Palestinian general legislative elections and government formation in January and April and the Israeli general elections in March. Of the two, the Israeli election seems less consequential. The elections were won handily by the incumbent party Kadima based on its past agenda of unilateral withdrawals. The Peace Index survey conducted after the election verifies that most respondents supported the winning coalition and split along predictable partisan and ideological lines. The Israeli election, therefore, ended expectedly and reinforced the political status quo.

The Palestinian election, by contrast, seems like a watershed moment. The Palestinian Legislative Council election was held for the first time in a decade after a long single-party reign by the Fatah party with which Israel previously negotiated. Yet, defying earlier expectations, most seats were surprisingly won by Hamas. In reality, Hamas's success reflected domestic frustration with the Fatah administration, in-fighting among their opponents, and advantageous electoral rules rather than popular support for its hawkish agenda (Shikaki and Shamir 2010). However, to Israeli eyes, the victory signaled a Palestinian preference for violent extremism. In the January 2006 Peace Index survey, 60% of Jewish respondents stated that Hamas's victory posed an existential threat to Israel and 74% predicted little to no chance that Hamas will eventually recognize Israel's right to exist. Moreover, 55% of Jewish respondents opposed direct negotiations with a Hamas-led government and 87% estimated that there is little to no chance of reaching a peace agreement with it.

The negative signal from Hamas's victory intensified in the next few months as more negative cues accumulated, fitting the lagged structural break in aggregate hope in April 2006. Following the election, the Middle East Quartet—the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, and Russia—demanded publicly that any Hamas-led government recognize Israel, accept previous bilateral agreements, and commit to non-violence. Hamas, however, blatantly

rejected these conditions, triggering severe international, American, and Israeli economic sanctions once the new government was sworn in. The Israeli public seemed to take notice: the Peace Index survey conducted in late March 2006, two months after the election, saw an increase in the share of Jewish respondents doubting that Hamas will moderate its violent behavior (79% compared to 50% in January) and a slightly higher objection to direct negotiations with the movement (57% compared to 54% in January). Hence, Hamas's public refusal to disavow violence and recognize Israel after its victory, as well as an aggressive international and Israeli delegitimization campaign in the following weeks, deepened the initial signal that the Palestinians prefer violent extremism to compromise. The result, evidently, is a notable years-long drop in aggregate Jewish-Israeli support and hope for compromise.

Early 2009: American-led Diplomatic Momentum and Subsequent Failure

Our structural breakpoint analysis finds that net support for negotiations, but not practical hopes for peace, bounced back around April 2009 (point B) before declining again in the following years. The main development in early 2009 signaled a new momentum in the peace process due to political changes in the US and Israel. In January 2009, US President Barack Obama took office with high expectations for a new diplomatic approach after the hawkish Bush years. Obama quickly appointed George Mitchell, known for his involvement in Northern Ireland's Good Friday Agreement, as his Special Envoy for restarting Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Meanwhile, in Israel, a new government headed by Benjamin Netanyahu was sworn into office in March and was immediately pressured on this issue by the US. In March and April 2009, Israel hosted formal visits by Mitchell and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, during which she publicly expressed her support for territorial compromise and objection to Israel's settlement policy. Additionally, an Obama-Netanyahu meeting was set for May with this agenda in mind. According to the Peace Index survey conducted in March 2009, 62% of Jewish respondents estimated that the Israeli government would strive to maintain a good relationship with the US regarding peace negotiations and would face severe pressure from Obama if not. Hence, the flurry of preparations in the spring of 2009 sent a visible signal that the US administration is determined to revive the peace process and that agreeing to negotiate is in Israel's best interest. That there was not a similar rise in practical hope for peace may indicate that many waited for substantial signs that the Palestinians are similarly committed.

Nevertheless, subsequent developments over the following months help explain the lagged but renewed decline in support for negotiations. The momentum continued during the summer, with Obama's dovish Cairo Speech and Netanyahu's public acceptance of the two-state solution in his Bar-Ilan University address. Furthermore, in November 2009, the Israeli government announced a 10-month settlement construction freeze following intense American pressure. By its conclusion, in September 2010, Israeli and Palestinian representatives were set to meet for direct peace talks in Washington D.C. and Sharm El Sheikh.

Yet the first cracks appeared early and expanded consistently. Despite Netanyahu's endorsement of the two-state solution, he developed a visibly strained relationship with Obama and repeatedly demanded strict preconditions for an agreement, particularly a formal Palestinian recognition in Israel as the State of the Jews. During the September 2010 talks, Israel's leadership continued to raise this demand publicly and refused to extend the settlement freeze without it. The Israeli public paid attention to this cue: in the Peace Index survey from October 2010, 75% of Jewish respondents justified Netanyahu's demand for Palestinian recognition and 81% agreed that the Palestinians did not accept Israel's existence and would destroy it if they could. The anticipated negotiations quickly imploded, leading the frustrated US administration to shift focus to other foreign policy areas. Both the initial momentum in early 2009 and its subsequent failure are mirrored well in the rise and fall of public support for negotiations, corroborating our earlier findings of the lagged but long-term influence of failed diplomacy.[18]

September 2013: More Futile Negotiations

The last two breakpoints exhibit smaller but noticeable breaks in attitudinal levels without changing their previous temporal trends. Nevertheless, they too align with discernable non-violent signals about the conflict's future. The first (point E) shows a decline in practical hope for peace in September 2013, two months after another round of direct negotiations initiated by incoming US Secretary of State John Kerry. Unlike the positive momentum in 2009, however, this round of negotiations never gained steam and ended quickly with a whimper. While the Jewish-Israeli public was skeptical from the start, it nevertheless grew more doubtful after the meetings. In the Peace Index survey from June 2013, before the negotiations started, 71.3% estimated that Kerry's

[18] Of these intricate political dynamics, our GECM analysis includes the 2010 summit as the relevant data point for negotiations. Hence, this chronology fits the negative pattern found in our GECM estimation.

initiative has low or very low success odds. After the meetings, this share grew to 79.4% in July and 81.2% in September. Hence, even a swift and low-key failure to restart negotiations deepened skepticism and led to an additional long-term decline in aggregate hope for peace. Echoing our GECM findings, this change became more pronounced a month or two after the direct meetings, as the extent of the failure was properly processed.

October 2016: Trump's Presidential Victory

The last structural breakpoint (point C) identifies rising support for negotiations after October 2016. The most notable event near this moment was US President Donald Trump's electoral victory in early November.[19] In the Peace Index survey conducted right after the presidential election, 48.5% of Jewish Israelis estimated that Trump favors Israel over the Palestinians and 61.8% assumed that he would not oppose and even actively support its settlement construction. By contrast, only 22.2% stated that Obama was friendly to Israel throughout his term. These attitudes fit comparative surveys showing that Israel was one of very few countries in which Trump was seen favorably during his term (e.g., Wike et al. 2020). Hence, Trump's victory seemed to signal greater US support for Israeli demands and a stronger bargaining position at the Palestinians' expense. This dynamic helps explain the structural bounce in willingness to negotiate even as the practical hope for peace remained low. While this signal is not directly about Palestinian intentions, it, too, illustrates the importance of changes in the conflict's ideological power-balance following cues from international actors.

Conclusion

Public opinion is a key aspect of violent conflicts. The levels of public support and hope for a resolution establish bottom-up pressures that can escalate or moderate the conflict's long-term path. Accordingly, a large and growing literature has explored the various factors that influence public attitudes in conflicts, with particular attention to violent events. Nevertheless, past findings have mostly explored short-term or static attitudinal differences across individuals and contexts, providing incomplete accounts of their full dynamic implications.

[19] Although the model identifies October as the clearest breakpoint, Figure 3 verifies that the bounce included the following months before assuming its previous trend. Moreover, October did not include other notable events.

Using a dynamic analysis of two decades of monthly surveys from Israel, we argue that real-world influences on public attitudes have a meaningful but understudied temporal dimension. While we corroborate the common argument that violence levels depress support and hope for compromise, we find that this influence is immediate and brief and does not change the long-term trajectory of public opinion. By contrast, non-violent political events carrying visible signals about the other side's preferences and the conflict's future, including failed negotiation meetings and hawkish leadership selection, have a lagged but longer-term effect on aggregate public opinion, lasting for months and even years. This conclusion is supported both by average patterns found with a general error-correction model and by an inductive structural breakpoint analysis matched with real-world events.

These dynamically divergent influences—and particularly the key political events that unfolded in 2006, 2009, 2013, and 2016—corroborate the two theoretical logics suggested in the paper. The sudden but fleeting effect of violence on attitudes implies an immediate reaction to a direct and palpable danger, rising and falling with the sense of physical threat that it triggers. By contrast, the lagged but longer-lasting reactions to non-violent information resemble rational belief updating after the new information and additional top-down cues are cognitively processed. While we do not test these behavioral mechanisms directly, our aggregate findings open new avenues for micro-behavioral research on their parallel influence, their different temporal implications, and their interrelations. Moreover, given the literature's focus on the influence of violence, more theoretical and empirical work is needed on real-world informational signals and their role in the long-term development of public opinion in various conflicts.

The latter point is particularly important for real-world initiatives advancing conflict resolution. Our findings imply that visible public attempts to manage or resolve conflicts by international and domestic actors can be a two-edged sword if unsuccessful. In the Israeli case, we showed that futile negotiation initiatives, especially when pushed by outside actors, not only failed to advance peace but also left an enduring negative mark on Israeli popular support and hope for compromise. Similarly, the way the international and local actors frame and react to the political choices made by one side to the conflict, such as the strong negative campaign against Hamas's looming government, can have deep and long-lasting adverse implications on the other side's attitudes about resolution. Even indirect cues, such as unconditional one-sided support by a major international actor, can move public opinion about resolution in noticeable ways. To the extent

that popular attitudes about peace matter, visible actions and cues by international and local elites must be made carefully and with a proper understanding of their possible long-term repercussions.

As noted earlier, our focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict offers valuable insights but raises natural questions about generalizability. Three contextual issues stand out, marking both the promise and limits of our conclusions as well as directions for further comparative research. First, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has lasted for over a century and has become embedded in Israeli politics and society, raising the concern that Israelis have become desensitized to violence. This worry, however, is inconsistent with a large body of evidence showing that the conflict's violence still triggers noteworthy emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral reactions among Israelis (e.g., Berrebi and Klor 2008; Besser and Neria 2009; Fielding and Penny 2009; Getmansky and Zeitzoff 2014; Gould and Klor 2010; Hirsch-Hoefler et al. 2014; Peffley, Hutchison, and Shamir 2015). Moreover, our conclusions are compatible with findings from other Western countries, where terrorist attacks at home or abroad have likewise led only to short-lived attitudinal shifts on security policies and social trust (Arvanitidis, Economou, and Kollias 2016; Economou and Kollias 2019; Finseraas and Listhaug 2013; Geys and Qari 2017). Similarly, a study on civilian mass shootings in the US found a comparable pattern of immediate emotional reactions that faded within mere days (Sharkey and Shen 2021). Thus, we expect to find similar temporal patterns elsewhere, including in shorter conflicts with less salient adversaries and in other types of violent contexts, although more comparative dynamic analyses are needed.

Second, the period that we analyze had few positive diplomatic breakthroughs. Our data, accordingly, do not test directly how aggregate public attitudes react to positive advancements in negotiations, which often come with temporary setbacks and violence. Descriptive data from the 1990s, the heyday of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, do not show notable spikes in Israeli public attitudes despite positive diplomatic developments (Hermann and Yuchtman-Yaar 2002). This pattern fits the expectation that negative events should have a stronger influence than positive ones. Nevertheless, recent experimental research finds that optimistic information about the adversary can increase support for compromise under certain conditions (Halperin et al. 2011; Leshem and Halperin 2020). Hence, a fuller understanding of this issue requires additional dynamic analyses of attitudinal changes in periods and regions that experienced real progress toward peace.

Finally, our focus on the Jewish Israeli public analyzes popular reactions among the stronger group in an asymmetrical conflict. However, these and other processes may manifest differently among minorities or weaker groups in uneven settings. Jaeger et al. (2012), for example, find similar short-lived Palestinian reactions to targeted Israeli violence but also a greater sensitivity to collateral violence of the sort endured more regularly in the territories. Accordingly, we need more direct comparisons of dynamic reactions across power hierarchies in asymmetrical conflicts. Our findings, we hope, help facilitate such future endeavors.

References

Arian, Asher, and Michal Shamir. 2008. “A Decade Later, The World Had Changed, The Cleavage Structure Remained: Israel 1996–2006.” *Party Politics* 14(6): 685–705.

Arian, Asher, Michal Shamir, and Raphael Ventura. 1992. “Public Opinion and Political Change: Israel and the Intifada.” *Comparative Politics* 24(3): 317–34.

Arvanitidis, Paschalis, Athina Economou, and Christos Kollias. 2016. “Terrorism’s Effects on Social Capital in European Countries.” *Public Choice* 169(3–4): 231–50.

Aytaç, S. Erdem, and Ali Çarkoğlu. 2021. “Terror Attacks, Issue Salience, and Party Competence: Diagnosing Shifting Vote Preferences in a Panel Study.” *Party Politics* 27(4): 755–66.

Bai, Jushan, and Pierre Perron. 1998. “Estimating and Testing Linear Models with Multiple Structural Changes.” *Econometrica* 66(1): 47.

———. 2003. “Computation and Analysis of Multiple Structural Change Models.” *Journal of Applied Econometrics* 18(1): 1–22.

Balcells, Laia. 2012. “The Consequences of Victimization on Political Identities: Evidence from Spain.” *Politics & Society* 40(3): 311–47.

Bali, Valentina A. 2007. “Terror and Elections: Lessons from Spain.” *Electoral Studies* 26(3): 669–87.

Bar-Tal, Daniel, and Eran Halperin. 2011. “Socio-Psychological Barriers to Conflict Resolution.” In *Intergroup Conflicts and Their Resolution: A Social Psychological Perspective*, ed. Daniel Bar-Tal. New York: Psychology Press.

Bar-Tal, Daniel, Amiram Raviv, Alona Raviv, and Adi Dgani-Hirsh. 2009. “The Influence of the Ethos of Conflict on Israeli Jews’ Interpretation of Jewish-Palestinian Encounters.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(1): 94–118.

Bayer, Christophe Pierre, Fionna Klasen, and Hubertus Adam. 2007. “Association of Trauma and PTSD Symptoms With Openness to Reconciliation and Feelings of Revenge Among Former Ugandan and Congolese Child Soldiers.” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 298(5): 555–59.

Beber, Bernd, Philip Roessler, and Alexandra Scacco. 2014. “Intergroup Violence and Political Attitudes: Evidence from a Dividing Sudan.” *Journal of Politics* 76(3): 649–65.

Berinsky, Adam J. 2009. *In Time of War: Understanding American Public Opinion from World War II to Iraq*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Berrebi, Claude, and Esteban F. Klor. 2006. “On Terrorism and Electoral Outcomes: Theory and Evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(6): 899–925.

———. 2008. “Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate.” *American Political Science Review* 102(3): 279–301.

Besser, Avi, and Yuval Neria. 2009. “PTSD Symptoms, Satisfaction With Life, and Prejudicial Attitudes Toward the Adversary Among Israeli Civilians Exposed to Ongoing Missile

Attacks." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 22(4): 268–75.

De Boef, Suzanna, and Luke Keele. 2008. "Taking Time Seriously." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(1): 184–200.

Bonanno, George A., and John T. Jost. 2006. "Conservative Shift Among High-Exposure Survivors of the September 11th Terrorist Attacks." *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 28(4): 311–23.

Brouard, Sylvain, Pavlos Vasilopoulos, and Martial Foucault. 2018. "How Terrorism Affects Political Attitudes: France in the Aftermath of the 2015–2016 Attacks." *West European Politics* 41(5): 1073–99.

Canetti-Nisim, Daphna, Eran Halperin, Keren Sharvit, and Stevan E. Hobfoll. 2009. "A New Stress-Based Model of Political Extremism: Personal Exposure to Terrorism, Psychological Distress, and Exclusionist Political Attitudes." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(3): 363–89.

Canetti, Daphna et al. 2017. "Exposure to Violence, Ethos of Conflict, and Support for Compromise: Surveys in Israel, East Jerusalem, West Bank, and Gaza." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61(1): 84–113.

———. 2018. "Psychological Barriers to a Peaceful Resolution: Longitudinal Evidence from the Middle East and Northern Ireland." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 41(8): 660–76.

Caporale, Tony, and Kevin Grier. 2005. "How Smart Is My Dummy? Time Series Tests for the Influence of Politics." *Political Analysis* 13(1): 77–94.

Cohen-Chen, Smadar, Eran Halperin, Roni Porat, and Daniel Bar-Tal. 2014. "The Differential Effects of Hope and Fear on Information Processing in Intractable Conflict." *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 2(1): 11–30.

Davidson, James E. H., David F. Hendry, Frank Srba, and Stephen Yeo. 1978. "Econometric Modelling of the Aggregate Time-Series Relationship Between Consumers' Expenditure and Income in the United Kingdom." *The Economic Journal* 88(352): 661–92.

Echebarria-Echabe, Agustin, and Emilia Fernández-Guede. 2006. "Effects of Terrorism on Attitudes and Ideological Orientation." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 36(2): 259–65.

Economou, Athina, and Christos Kollias. 2019. "Security Policy Preferences of EU Citizens: Do Terrorist Events Affect Them?" *Public Choice* 178(3–4): 445–71.

Fielding, David, and Madeline Penny. 2009. "What Causes Changes in Opinion About the Israeli–Palestinian Peace Process?" *Journal of Peace Research* 46(1): 99–118.

Finseraas, Henning, and Ola Listhaug. 2013. "It Can Happen Here: The Impact of the Mumbai Terror Attacks on Public Opinion in Western Europe." *Public Choice* 156(1–2): 213–28.

Getmansky, Anna, and Thomas Zeitzoff. 2014. "Terrorism and Voting: The Effect of Rocket Threat on Voting in Israeli Elections." *American Political Science Review* 108(3): 588–604.

Geys, Benny, and Salmai Qari. 2017. "Will You Still Trust Me Tomorrow? The Causal Effect of Terrorism on Social Trust." *Public Choice* 173(3–4): 289–305.

Gordon, Carol, and Asher Arian. 2001. "Threat and Decision Making." *Journal of Conflict*

Resolution 45(2): 196–215.

Gould, Eric D., and Esteban F. Klor. 2010. "Does Terrorism Work?" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 125(4): 1459–1510.

Grant, Taylor, and Matthew J. Lebo. 2016. "Error Correction Methods with Political Time Series." *Political Analysis* 24(1): 3–30.

Greene, Talya, Liat Itzhaky, Israel Bronstein, and Zahava Solomon. 2018. "Psychopathology, Risk, and Resilience Under Exposure to Continuous Traumatic Stress: A Systematic Review of Studies Among Adults Living in Southern Israel." *Traumatology* 24(2): 83–103.

Hall, Jonathan, Iosif Kovras, Djordje Stefanovic, and Neophytos Loizides. 2018. "Exposure to Violence and Attitudes Towards Transitional Justice." *Political Psychology* 39(2): 345–63.

Halperin, Eran. 2011. "Emotional Barriers to Peace: Emotions and Public Opinion of Jewish Israelis About the Peace Process in the Middle East." *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 17(1): 22–45.

———. 2011. "Promoting the Middle East Peace Process by Changing Beliefs About Group Malleability." *Science* 333(6050): 1767–70.

Halperin, Eran, and Daniel Bar-Tal. 2011. "Socio-Psychological Barriers Peace Making: An Empirical Examination Within the Israeli Jewish Society." *Journal of Peace Research* 48(5): 637–51.

Hazlett, Chad. 2019. "Angry or Weary? How Violence Impacts Attitudes toward Peace among Darfurian Refugees." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*: 1–27.

Hermann, Tamar, and Ephraim Yaar. 2019. "Heskem Oslo Be-Da'at Ha-Ḳahal - Eśrim Ṿkhamesh Shanim Akhrey [The Oslo Accords in Public Opinion - Twenty-Five Years Later]." In *25 Shanah Le-Tahalikh Oslo: Tsiyun Derekh Ba-Nisyonot Le-Yisuv Ha-Sikhsukh Ha-Yiśre'eli-Palesṭini [The Oslo Peace Process: A Twenty Five Years Perspective]*, eds. Efrayim Lavi, Yaël Ronen, and Henri Fishman. Jerusalem: Carmel.

Hermann, Tamar, and Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar. 2002. "Divided yet United: Israeli-Jewish Attitudes Toward the Oslo Process." *Journal of Peace Research* 39(5): 597–613.

von Hippel, Paul T. 2007. "Regression with Missing Ys: An Improved Strategy for Analyzing Multiply Imputed Data." *Sociological Methodology* 37(1): 83–117.

Hirsch-Hoefler, Sivan, Daphna Canetti, Carmit Rapaport, and Stevan E. Hobfoll. 2014. "Conflict Will Harden Your Heart: Exposure to Violence, Psychological Distress, and Peace Barriers in Israel and Palestine." *British Journal of Political Science* 46(4): 845–59.

Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Theresa Capelos, and Colin Provost. 2002. "The Consequences of Terrorism: Disentangling the Effects of Personal and National Threat." *Political Psychology* 23(3): 485–509.

Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Charles Taber, and Gallya Lahav. 2005. "Threat, Anxiety, and Support of Antiterrorism Policies." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 593–608.

Jaeger, David A., Esteban F. Klor, Sami H. Miaari, and M. Daniele Paserman. 2012. "The Struggle for Palestinian Hearts and Minds: Violence and Public Opinion in the Second Intifada." *Journal of Public Economics* 96(3–4): 354–68.

Kam, Cindy D., and Donald R. Kinder. 2007. “Terror and Ethnocentrism: Foundations of American Support for the War on Terrorism.” *Journal of Politics* 69(2): 320–38.

Keele, Luke, Suzanna Linn, and Clayton McLaughlin Webb. 2016. “Treating Time with All Due Seriousness Luke.” *Political Analysis* 24(1): 31–41.

Kibris, Arzu. 2011. “Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behavior in Turkey.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(2): 220–47.

Kupatadze, Alexander, and Thomas Zeitzoff. 2021. “In the Shadow of Conflict: How Emotions, Threat Perceptions and Victimization Influence Foreign Policy Attitudes.” *British Journal of Political Science* 51(1): 181–202.

Landau, Mark J. et al. 2004. “Deliver Us from Evil: The Effects of Mortality Salience and Reminders of 9/11 on Support for President George W. Bush.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 30(9): 1136–50.

Leshem, Oded Adomi. 2019. “The Pivotal Role of the Enemy in Inducing Hope for Peace.” *Political Studies* 67(3): 693–711.

Leshem, Oded Adomi, and Eran Halperin. 2020. “Hoping for Peace during Protracted Conflict: Citizens’ Hope Is Based on Inaccurate Appraisals of Their Adversary’s Hope for Peace.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 64(7–8): 1390–1417.

———. 2021. “Threatened by the Worst but Hoping for the Best: Unraveling the Relationship Between Threat, Hope, and Public Opinion During Conflict.” *Political Behavior*.

Levy, Yagil. 2012. *Israel’s Death Hierarchy: Casualty Aversion in a Militarized Democracy*. New York: New York University Press.

Little, Roderick J.A. 1992. “Regression With Missing X’s: A Review.” *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 87(420): 1227–37.

Lupia, Arthur, and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1998. *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What They Need to Know?* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lupu, Noam, and Leonid Peisakhin. 2017. “The Legacy of Political Violence across Generations.” *American Journal of Political Science* 61(4): 836–51.

Malhotra, Neil, and Elizabeth Popp. 2012. “Bridging Partisan Divisions over Antiterrorism Policies: The Role of Threat Perceptions.” *Political Research Quarterly* 65(1): 34–47.

Maoz, Ifat, and Clark McCauley. 2005. “Psychological Correlates of Support for Compromise: A Polling Study of Jewish-Israeli Attitudes toward Solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.” *Political Psychology* 26(5): 791–807.

Nyhan, Brendan, and Thomas Zeitzoff. 2018. “Fighting the Past: Perceptions of Control, Historical Misperceptions, and Corrective Information in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.” *Political Psychology* 39(3): 611–31.

Peffley, Mark, Marc L. Hutchison, and Michal Shamir. 2015. “The Impact of Persistent Terrorism on Political Tolerance: Israel, 1980 to 2011.” *American Political Science Review* 109(4): 817–32.

Rosler, Nimrod, Smadar Cohen-Chen, and Eran Halperin. 2017. “The Distinctive Effects of Empathy and Hope in Intractable Conflicts.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61(1): 114–39.

Rozenas, Arturas, Sebastian Schutte, and Yuri Zhukov. 2017. “The Political Legacy of Violence: The Long-Term Impact of Stalin’s Repression in Ukraine.” *Journal of Politics* 79(4): 1147–61.

Shamir, Michal, and Asher Arian. 1999. “Collective Identity and Electoral Competition in Israel.” *American Political Science Review* 93(2): 265–77.

Sharkey, Patrick, and Yinzhi Shen. 2021. “The Effect of Mass Shootings on Daily Emotions Is Limited by Time, Geographic Proximity, and Political Affiliation.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 118(23).

Sheafer, Tamir, and Shira Dvir-Gvirsman. 2010. “The Spoiler Effect: Framing Attitudes and Expectations toward Peace.” *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2): 205–15.

Shikaki, Khalil, and Jacob Shamir. 2010. *Palestinian and Israeli Public Opinion: The Public Imperative in the Second Intifada*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Tellez, Juan Fernando. 2019. “Worlds Apart: Conflict Exposure and Preferences for Peace.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(4): 1053–76.

Vasilopoulos, Pavlos, George E. Marcus, Nicholas A. Valentino, and Martial Foucault. 2019. “Fear, Anger, and Voting for the Far Right: Evidence From the November 13, 2015 Paris Terror Attacks.” *Political Psychology* 40(4): 679–704.

Wawro, Gregory J., and Ira Katznelson. 2014. “Designing Historical Social Scientific Inquiry: How Parameter Heterogeneity Can Bridge the Methodological Divide between Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches.” *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2): 526–46.

Webb, Clayton, Suzanna Linn, and Matthew J. Lebo. 2020. “Beyond the Unit Root Question: Uncertainty and Inference.” *American Journal of Political Science* 64(2): 275–92.

Wike, Richard, Jacob Poushter, Janell Fetterolf, and Shannon Schumacher. 2020. *Trump Ratings Remain Low Around Globe, While Views of U.S. Stay Mostly Favorable*. Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center.

Wohl, Michael J. A., Nyla R. Branscombe, and Stephen Reysen. 2010. “Perceiving Your Group’s Future to Be in Jeopardy: Extinction Threat Induces Collective Angst and the Desire to Strengthen the Ingroup.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 36(7): 898–910.

Wolfsfeld, Gadi. 2004. *Media and the Path to Peace*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zeitzoff, Thomas. 2014. “Anger, Exposure to Violence, and Intragroup Conflict: A ‘Lab in the Field’ Experiment in Southern Israel.” *Political Psychology* 35(3): 309–35.